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"Everything written by Dr. Türck is written from the mind of the idealist, every paragraph brings a revelation producing a joyful surprise." Hofrat Dr. Friedr. Dukmeyer, *idem.*

"The high and free standpoint chosen by the author enables him to open many a surprising outlook on the career of all these prominent figures, and to give many a deep insight into their mental life. Nay, even a new light is cast on the activity of Christ, for instance on His relation towards John the Baptist. Dr. Türck's book becomes instructive and valuable by the fact that he succeeds in combining in a clever manner historical speculation with æsthetic criticism. There are few occasions on which one disagrees with him." *Vossische Zeitung.*

THE MAN OF GENIUS

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NOTE

This book was translated from the sixth edition of the German original by the late Professor George J. Tamson, lecturer in English at the University of Göttingen. The additions to the book in the seventh German edition, the explanation of Ibsen's "Ghosts" in Chapter XI and the whole of Chapter XII, were translated by Mrs. Elizabeth C. Deibel. The entire English version was then thoroughly revised by Mr. George F. Payn, reader to the Tauchnitz Edition in Leipzig, and editor of James's German-English dictionary, Professor F. Sefton Delmer, lecturer in English at the University of Berlin, and Mr. John A. Falconer of the English Seminary at the Hamburg Colonial Institute.

In the following lectures it is the author's design to develop definite trains of thought as clearly as possible. This endeavour may be responsible for a certain amount of repetition by which means alone, however, it was possible to arrange the book so that each chapter should form a complete whole which may be read independently.

I.

ARTISTIC ENJOYMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY OF THE MAN OF GENIUS

SCHOPENHAUER makes the statement that "*genius* is simply the completest *objectivity*, i. e., the objective tendency of the mind, as opposed to the subjective, which is directed to one's own self — in other words, to the" selfish "will." [1] Goethe observes: "The first and last thing that is demanded of genius is love of truth." [2] No one will deny that both Schopenhauer and Goethe are entitled to speak with some authority in this matter, for each of them was a genius of no mean order. How then do the statements of these two great men stand to each other? Is it objectivity or is it love of truth that forms the essential factor of genius? The question is not very difficult to answer; for objectivity and love of truth are merely two different expressions for one and the same attitude of mind. In order to be able to judge objectively, we must, to a certain extent, be above the thing to be judged. The longing to ascertain the actual facts, to sift what is true from what is untrue, must far outweigh any temptation to present the resultant facts in some particular form cor-

[1] *The World as Will and Idea.* Translated by R. B. Haldane & J. Kemp. 6th ed., 1907-9, vol. I, p. 240.

[2] *Criticisms, Reflections, and Maxims.* Translated by W. B Rönnfeldt, p. 224.

responding to a personal desire of our own. From the moment that we cease to be above the thing to be judged, we cease to judge objectively, and truth is to us no longer of any importance. From the moment we entertain the personal desire of seeing the matter in question reveal itself in some particular aspect, we cease to be unbiassed in the investigation, and, consciously or unconsciously, we are dishonest.

Honesty, love of truth, and objectivity are therefore identical. Everyone who has a personal interest in a matter is, from the very outset, exposed to the suspicion of stating the case to his own advantage, and the stronger this personal interest is, the stronger will also be the tendency to look at the matter in a biassed, subjective way. The moment personal interest, subjectivity, and self-seeking enter the field, truth is put to flight.

And just as self-seeking, subjectivity, and falsehood are kith and kin, so love, which is the antithesis of self-seeking, and objectivity, which is the pure, single-eyed interest in the thing itself, are akin to truth. If self-seeking makes one blind, and incapable of recognising truth, if the self-seeking man is at the same time the narrow-minded man, then on the other hand love makes a man clairvoyant, intuitive, a diviner of hidden things. The man who has an interest merely in the thing itself, who is impersonal, disinterested, loving, is the man whom truth rushes to meet of its own accord; the man who is impartial and just, who observes objectively, will thus at the same time be the man of genius; for we must agree with Schopenhauer, that "genius is simply the completest objectivity," and with Goethe, that "the first and last thing that is demanded of genius is love of truth."

Now, as objectivity and love of truth are based on that tendency of the will which we call love, as opposed

to self-seeking, we may say that the degree of love in a man is the measure of the genius he possesses, and that the degree of his self-seeking is the measure of his narrow-mindedness.

Other observations made by Goethe in his "Maxims and Reflections" still further confirm these views: "In art and knowledge, as also in deed and action, all depends upon the object's being clearly apprehended and treated in accordance with its nature." [1] Again: "By ill-will and hatred a man's observation is limited to the surface of things, even though those qualities be accompanied by a keen perception. But if the latter goes hand in hand with good-will and love, it is able to penetrate into the heart of man and the world, and may even attain to the supreme goal." [2] Later on: "The whole art of living consists in giving up our existence" — an existence self-seeking and confined to ourselves — "in order to exist," [3] that is, all the more truly and on a higher standard. Further, in "After Falconet and about Falconet": "What the artist has not loved, does not love, he should not depict, he cannot depict."

Let us now attempt to gain a clear conception of the truth that love pervades and illumines all, and begin with the domain of æsthetics. The first requisite for the productivity of the artist is his enjoyment. The artist cannot produce, unless his mind has previously received the most manifold impressions. Goethe, who may in this respect also be taken as an authority, states: "It is sometimes said in praise of an artist that he has evolved everything out of himself. Would that I might never hear this again! Properly speaking, the productions of an original genius of that kind are composed for the most

[1] *Criticisms, Reflections, and Maxims*, p. 163. — [2] *Id.* pp. 175-6. — [3] *Id.* p. 178.

part of reminiscences; any one who has experience will be able to recall numbers of specific instances."[1]

The manner of creative production is therefore directly determined by the nature of the impressions received by the artist. To be able to paint with genius, one must be able to see with genius; to compose with genius, one must be able to hear with genius. Technical aids, talent in execution, dexterity, and self-discipline, are naturally most important factors in carrying out a piece of work, the part they play is, however, but a secondary one. Lessing's statement is frequently quoted, that Raphael, even if he had by some mischance been born without hands, would nevertheless have been a painter of supreme genius. Why? Because even without hands, he would still have seen the world through the divine eyes of genius, eyes through which the world shone in bathed in the beauty of the ideal. His hands only enabled him to represent what he saw; for what he saw filled him with the rapture that urges a man to create, to fix his impressions, first for himself, and then for others.

The difference, therefore, between the genius and the every-day man lies in their totally different manner of receiving sense-impressions. When a bull and a Raphael contemplate the same landscape, the landscape of course remains the same; what is not the same, however, is the impression received by each. The bull probably sees in the landscape only a mixture of colour-blotches such as many of our impressionist painters nowadays represent. A Raphael, on the other hand, sees even the most delicate shades of colour, the finest gradations of light and shadow; he traces the contours of the objects, and follows the lines of the hills with his eye; and all these colours, lights, and lines awaken peculiar,

[1] *Criticisms, Reflections, and Maxims*, pp. 245-6.

harmonious feelings in his mind; for a Raphael the whole landscape speaks a language that the bull does not understand, because the bull sees only the green spot that to him means fodder.

To form a conception of artistic genius, we must first of all take into consideration how the æsthetically gifted, as opposed to the æsthetically limited man, allows sense-impressions to affect him; for this purpose a critique of the senses, as Goethe calls it, is necessary. Concerning this he says: "Kant has made us acquainted with the critique of reason, and taught us that this, the highest of human powers, has need to keep a careful watch over itself. Of the great benefit which we have derived therefrom, it is to be hoped that every man has convinced himself. But I should like to suggest that we require a critique of the senses, if Art in general, and especially German art, is ever to regain its vigour and to advance in a satisfactory and hopeful manner." [1]

How then is the mode of sensation or sense-reception of the man of genius connected with the objectivity, which Schopenhauer claims as the special mark of genius; how, further, is it connected with the love of truth, which Goethe demands of genius; and finally how is it connected with that love — or intensified objective interest as opposed to self-seeking — which is such an essential symptom of the presence of genius?

In order to answer these questions, we must look a little more closely into the psychic process of sensation or reception of sense-impressions, bearing in mind the distinction drawn by psychologists between sensation and feeling; by sensation being meant the mere admittance of sense-impressions, and by feeling, on the other hand, that psychic state of pleasure and pain, of comfort and discomfort, connected with every reception of sense-impressions

[1] *Criticisms, Reflections, and Maxims*, p. 247.

as well as with every other psychic activity. Thus, for example, when we meet a lady in the street who wears a scarlet dress, a grass-green cloak, and a bright yellow hat, the psychologist calls the mere seeing of the colours red, green, and yellow a sensation, while he calls the satisfaction or dissatisfaction connected with the sight of this colour-combination a feeling.

Let us now consider a simple psychic process, such, for instance, as takes place in a wild animal on sighting its prey, and thus try to make clear to ourselves the interplay of the various psychic activities, sensation, comprehension, and resolution or desire. Suppose a hungry lion prowling around suddenly sees a slender gazelle in a thicket. What feeling would be combined with this visual sensation in the lion? Would the lion become absorbed in the contemplation of the slender limbs and graceful movements of the pretty creature? Would an æsthetic feeling of pleasure arise at the same time with the visual sensation? Clearly not, and why? Because the beast of prey, driven by hunger, could feel no interest in the mere outward looks of the gazelle. On the contrary, urged by the wildest desire to appease hunger, the lion cannot possibly be satisfied with merely gazing at the gazelle. The visual sensation is for the beast of prey nothing but a signal that sets in motion, first its primitive power of thought, and next its desire. Simultaneously with the visual impression, the vague idea of an object that promises satiety arises like a flash in the beast's brain. It is unconscious of the gazelle's individuality and its exquisite grace, and sees in it only a specimen of those animals that serve it as food. As soon as the beast of prey has combined this simple general conception with the visual sensation, it has done with the sensation as such, and hence no longer dwells upon it.

If the visual sensation, or the auxiliary sensations of smelling and hearing, had not been sharp and distinct enough, the lion would at first have started, stopped in his tracks, and scrutinized the object more keenly, to see what kind of thing was moving in the thicket, whether a possible victim or another beast of prey. If thus in doubt, the lion would actually have dwelt on the visual sensation, or on the impression made upon him by any of the other senses, but obviously only until, with his primitive powers of thinking, he had decided whether he is to class the animal in question with those that serve him as prey, or with those that might oppose him and become dangerous to him. If the general conception of something to kill and eat becomes combined, either at once or after some hesitation and examination, with the visual impression, then this conception will direct the animal's instinct to satisfy his hunger. The general idea of an object of prey, combined with the visual sensation, forms a guide for the animal's instinct. The general idea, thought, or conception, is like a switchman sending the rushing train, that is, the instinct demanding satisfaction, along the right track. As soon as the lion has decided that he has before him a beast fit for prey, the resolution to fall on it and rend it to pieces is at once formed.

Thus sensation, thought, and resolution pass into one another. Sensation instantly becomes thought, thought becomes resolution, and resolution leads to action. The main point of this whole inner process remains, for the beast of prey, the instinct to satisfy its hunger, and this instinct presses into its service the processes of sensation, thought and action. The visual sensation, its collocation into the general idea of an object suitable for the satisfaction of hunger, and the movement

in the direction of this object, are here only subordinate factors, the mere means to an end, and not the end and purpose itself. Neither in the mere contemplation of the gazelle, nor in the mere mental operation of recognising the gazelle as his "kill," nor in the mere action of leaping forward and seizing the gazelle, does the beast of prey take any interest whatever, its whole will being intent solely and exclusively on satisfying its appetite. Thus sensation, thought, and action are here entirely subordinate to the — selfish — will.

Now, does the lion behave subjectively or objectively on perceiving the gazelle? Subjectively, it is clear. According to Schopenhauer, by subjectivity is meant "the tendency of the mind directed to one's own self — in other words, to the" selfish "will." Subjectivity and self-seeking are therefore identical.

It is the same with man. Every time he is subjective and pursues self-seeking interests, he behaves like the beast of prey. He occupies himself neither with mere seeing, with mere thinking and comprehending, nor with that pure species of action the purpose of which lies in itself; but sensation, comprehension, and action are for the subjectively biassed man also only means to an end, means to accomplish his own selfish will, to satisfy his own self-interest.

To become absorbed in the contemplation of any object, to be able to dwell on any sensation at all with undivided attention necessitates detachment of the mind from every personal, subjective, self-seeking interest. In so far as self-interest comes into play, a man as well as an animal first seeks only to grasp the significance of the sensation for his personal well-being, in order to regulate his conduct by it, and when this significance has been discovered, he finds no further use in lingering over the sensation.

Let us imagine a timber-merchant whose whole interest happens to consist in making as much money as possible. He wishes to buy a forest for the purpose of clearing it, and goes to inspect it. He will carefully examine the condition of the forest; he will note the different kinds of timber, will compute his probable gains, will notice everything which has reference to his business, and when he has done all this he will go away again. Has he seen the forest? No, provided that he has only had a selfish business-interest in it; he has only seen that there is "money in it." In looking at the forest, he dwelt upon it only as long as was necessary for him to calculate its possible advantage to himself. The shifting lights, the gentle dreamy rustling of the tree-tops, the trickling rills, the song of the birds, the graceful lizard gliding through the leaves upon the ground, all this perhaps will strike his eye and ear, but it will recoil without effect, and strike no chord of sympathy in his soul. The man's interest is directed to an entirely different point, his eye sees and his ear hears only things that have some bearing on this point; all else knocks in vain at the portals of his soul for admittance.

For in all our sense-perceptions we consciously or unconsciously select, sift, and arrange. Every moment of our waking state a host of impressions makes appeal to our senses. Our clothes, shoes, and hat produce friction and pressure on the skin; the ground on which we walk, the chair on which we sit, the table on which we lean, call forth sensations of pressure; the draught of air that passes over us brings with it sensations both of touch and temperature; before our eyes the most various objects are in motion; our ears are struck by the most miscellaneous sounds; and yet of many, indeed it may be said of the greater number of these sense-excitations we know nothing

at all, because our attention is directed to quite definite sensations connected with the interest that occupies us at the moment.

Therefore among the numerous sense-stimulations that reach us simultaneously at any given instant, we always make a selection, particular stimulations being preferred and admitted into the bright light of consciousness, while others are pushed into the background and obstructed, so that we hardly become aware of them or not at all. But this selection among the many simultaneous stimulations is directly influenced by man's conscious or unconscious will, by his impulses, inclinations, interests, by his whole character. Thus, for instance, the egotistical man, who regards everything in its relation to himself, will only be able to think of himself when anything affects his senses, he will see and hear only that which is connected with his selfish interest, he becomes narrowed and confined, therefore, in the use of his senses by his natural selfishness. Whatever does not minister to his self-seeking, he neither sees nor hears; it has no existence for him. He is blind and deaf to whatever lies beyond his interest in himself.

Hence Goethe's remark: "As in Rome there was, in addition to the Romans, also a population of statues, so too there is, in addition to this real world, a world of illusion which is far more potent than the other, and in which the majority of persons live,"[1] namely the narrow-minded, self-seeking everyday-folk.

For the better understanding of these psychic processes, a brief psychological explanation of the word "feeling" may here be given. Sensation we call the mere reception of sense-impressions; feeling, on the other hand, the resultant and concomitant satisfaction or dissatisfaction,

[1] *Criticisms, Reflections, and Maxims*, pp. 176-7.

pleasure or pain. Of course, agreeable and disagreeable feelings, pleasure and pain, occur not only in combination with sensation, but also in close combination with thoughts and impulses of the will, in other words, with any psychic operation whatever. An absurd, foolish thought awakens dissatisfaction, a sensible, wise idea causes pleasure. A passion by which we are ruled may under certain circumstances fill us with the deepest grief and a good, honest resolution with the greatest joy. The feelings of pleasure or pain, of satisfaction or dissatisfaction in all their many gradations, are therefore constant accompaniments of all psychic operations, hence of all sensations, thoughts, and aspirations. But every activity is directed to some end, and at the base of every activity lies the wish to attain this end; while every approach to this end is accompanied by the feeling of pleasure, and every departure from it by that of annoyance. If then the mind is occupied with any operation, such, for example, as the operation of perceiving or receiving sensations, of understanding or arranging sensations under some general idea, of willing or determining to do something, — then pleasure will accompany an approach towards the object of such an operation, annoyance a departure from it.

Usually it is said that a man desires that which causes him pleasure. But in reality a man finds pleasure only in the attainment of his desire, of that towards which, consciously or unconsciously, his natural impulse is directed. The lion is not pleased with the mere sight of the graceful gazelle, because it is not the sight of the gazelle he wishes for, but its flesh and blood. If he saw the gazelle without being able to approach it, the sight, far from filling the lion with satisfaction, would convulse him with rage. Similarly the sight of a beautiful forest which a

rival has forestalled him in buying would not produce in the timber-merchant a mood of æsthetic pleasure, but one of resentment.

Therefore when we see a man take pleasure in the mere sight of an object, we may assume that, as long as this pleasure lasts, he desires the sight of the object only and nothing else; that consequently he takes no material, no subjective, no selfish, personal interest in the object, but only an ideal, objective one; that he is in fact a man of genius, at least during those moments of objective contemplation.

The genius is distinguished from the ordinary, average man only by being permanently and intensively in this state of disinterested absorption in mere sensation, whereas the average man is able only transiently, and usually for some special reason, so far to forget himself and his earthly needs, as to be carried away by contemplation, by hearing, or by imaginative impressions and thus to enter into the blessedness of a god, a genius, a pure spirit, who does not need to seek anxiously for himself within himself, because he finds himself in all else.

With reference to this Schopenhauer says: "Genius consists in the capacity of being the pure subject of knowledge," that is, of being quite disinterestedly carried away by contemplation. "Yet this faculty must exist in all men in a smaller and different degree; for if not, such men would be just as incapable of enjoying works of art as of producing them; they would have no susceptibility for the beautiful or the sublime; indeed, these words could have no meaning for them. We must therefore assume that there exists in all men this power of knowing the Ideas in things, and consequently of transcending their personality for the moment, unless indeed there are some men

who are capable of no æsthetic pleasure at all. The man of genius excels ordinary men only by possessing this kind of knowledge in a far higher degree and more continuously. Thus, while under its influence, he retains the presence of mind which is necessary to enable him to repeat in a voluntary and intentional work what he has learned in this manner; and this repetition is the work of art." [1]

This disinterested absorption in the contemplation of the object is identical with love for the object. To say that the mere sight of it suffices to give us enjoyment, is to say that we wish to have the object what it is; we do not wish to have it destroyed, altered, or incorporated in ourselves, but preserved in its actual state, we rejoice in its mere existence, in other words, we love it. "Love," says Spinoza, "is joy with the accompanying idea of an external cause." [2] Love is the will which is directed to the existence of another, selfishness the will whose only aim is one's own existence. We do not love an object because it is beautiful; it appears to us beautiful because we love it. For when we love it, we wish it to exist, and hence we shall notice in its outward appearance that, above all, which contributes to its power of existence and on which its existence depends, that is, the harmony, the vital cooperation of its parts. But again, on this harmony of the parts and their co-operation to produce a living whole all beauty depends, or rather beauty is this harmony itself, this unity in multiplicity, this order in diversity.

In a passage in one of his æsthetic essays, Schiller speaks of those moods in which even the sand that ripples

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. I, pp. 251-2.

[2] *Ethic.* Translated by W. H. White; translation revised by A. H. Sterling, 4th ed., 1910, p. 163. — "Amor est laetitia concomitante idea causae externae."

at our feet appears beautiful to us. And now we return to the point from which we started when we asserted that it is the manner of seeing and hearing, of receiving impressions in general, that constitutes artistic genius. It is objectivity, love, the interest merely in the thing itself, that enables the man of genius to become absorbed in an object, to lose himself completely in the impression it produces. But the more we abandon ourselves in this manner to things themselves, the more will they say to us, the more will they reveal to us their most secret nature, and the more closely shall we approach truth. Hence Goethe's saying: "The first and last thing that is demanded of genius is love of truth." But what is truth?

Truth is the all-unity of mind. Truth is, that all men, all animals, all things, the whole apparent world, are only the outward and visible expression of one single Being Whom we call God. Men, animals, plants, and all seemingly lifeless things, are only masks and disguises of the Divinity. God is contained in all, and so the division and separation among persons as well as among things is only seemingly such. For in reality everything is one Personality, or one spiritual Unity, whichever we choose to call it. By their outward appearance things and also persons are separated from each other, but truth is their unity.

Now, the further a man penetrates through this outward semblance into the nature of things, and the more he becomes absorbed in their inmost being, the more will he recognise their unity, first their unity among themselves, and next their unity with himself. He recognises himself in them, his soul is reflected in them, and God within him perceives Himself in His world. Beauty is the visible expression of this relation between

observer and observed, between subject and object. Beauty is divine unity in sensation. The artistic genius observes with the eyes and hears with the ears of God.

The Hindoo says, "Thou art I;" that means, my ego lives again in you, my ego is much greater than I know myself, my ego is not confined to my person alone, but embraces all that exists. When I die, only this one form of my ego vanishes, while countless other forms remain and continually arise anew. Death does not annihilate me, for I live in God, and God lives in all. Love is the expression of this relation; it unites what is seemingly divided: it brings about the gracious miracle that man passes beyond his finite, limited, single personality, by expanding his ego and absorbing into his will the existences of others too. What else is loving but enriching, expanding, enlarging oneself by the addition of what one loves? Why do I take care of him whom I love, why do I give him of my best, and even, when necessary, lay down my life for him? Why do I do all this? Because my ego has become a part of his ego; because I live in him, just as he, if he loves me, lives also in me. I can enlarge and expand my ego more and more by expanding my love in ever wider circles, until I have received within my will the existence of the whole world.

Hence Schiller says: "Love is the noblest phenomenon in the world of souls, the all-powerful magnet in the spiritual sphere, the source of devotion and of the sublimest virtue. Yet love is only the reflection of this single original Power, an attraction of the Excellent, based upon an instantaneous permutation of individuality, an interchange of being. When I hate, I take something from myself; when I love, I become richer by what I love.

"There are moments in life when we are impelled to press to our heart every flower, every remote star, each worm, and the sublimest spirit we can think of. We are impelled to embrace them, all nature, as we do our beloved. A man who has advanced so far as to read off all the beauty, greatness, and excellence in the great and small of nature, and to find the great unity for this manifold variety, has advanced much nearer to the Divinity. The great creation flows into his personality. If each man loved all men, each individual would possess the whole world."[1]

Such is the expression of the godlike feeling of Schiller's genius.

The self-seeking, subjectively prejudiced man robs himself of these highest goods, and therein lies his shallowness, his narrowmindedness, in the domain of art as well as in other fields. By loving only himself, by desiring merely his own existence, and by regarding everything only from the standpoint of his personal interest, he impoverishes himself and remains blind to the boundless wealth that surrounds him, to the divine, ideal beauty that beams in upon him from all sides.

Objectivity, love, is the secret of all genius, hence also of artistic intuition. The artist loves the object that he contemplates, he desires its existence, and consequently he regards it not one-sidedly, not with reference to particular characteristics of practical interest, but from all sides, in all directions essential to the existence of the object itself. He does not see in the forest, as the timber-merchant does, a mere business project, a sum of money; he loves the thing, the forest itself. It pleases him, because he is engrossed by the sight of it, because he sees and hears it all. He is indeed all eye and ear, delighted by the fragment of still-life before him that speaks in so

[1] *Æsthetical and Philosophical Essays*. Newly translated, 1910, pp. 385, 387.

eloquent a language to his heart, he seeks to give expression to his feelings, and thus there arises, according to the special talent and to the chosen form of art of the person in question, a poem, a song, a picture, or a marble statue. If he has been denied the power of embodying his feelings in an artistic form, he will try to express himself in abstract thought or noble action.

That which the artist produces is therefore not a mere, outward imitation of the object, but an original creation which owes its origin to the impression made by the object. It is impossible for the artist to make a mere imitation serve the purpose of the beautiful reality, since the latter must ever be far superior to any imitation. The artist therefore creates a second reality, a second original under the impression made by the first, and this now acts upon us as the first reality acted upon him.

It is utterly ridiculous and inadmissible to demand that an artist should keep exactly to his model and do nothing more than counterfeit nature, that he should not, for the life of him, idealise and compose, but only reproduce some fragment or other of existing nature, and this without adding to or taking from it anything whatever. That would be not art, but a childish pastime, for it would entirely miss its aim, seeing that a mere, dead, spiritless imitation cannot approach the original in its effect. The man who loves, however, sees the object already idealised and perfected. Again and again he becomes engrossed in the contemplation of the beauty of each separate part, until the whole melts together into a single harmony; it becomes a unity, a complete whole — a finished poem, a musical composition, or a picture.

The mere cold reproduction of a fragment singled out and torn off from the reality is an absolute impossibility to an artistic genius. For such work a shallow, prosaic

man is required, not a man of genius. Since the former studies the object before him without loving it, he does not penetrate into its innermost being, but notices only its purely external characteristics. The object does not become alive for him, it does not speak to him, because he remains a stranger to it; for what we do not love, remains for us a purely external, a secondary, a strange and incomprehensible thing. The artistic genius finds himself again in the beloved object — as Byron says:

> "I live not in myself, but I become
> Portion of that around me."[1]

— the prosaic, narrow-minded man gapes at the thing and believes that he is reproducing it, when he records a few outward features which strike his eye. With all his striving to be perfectly natural, such an artist becomes quite unnatural, for no mere imitation of nature can be nature itself, and hence will always be something quite different. The man of genius, on the other hand, who grasps the purposes of nature, himself creates a piece of nature under its influence. The man of genius is always original and natural, from the very fact that he does not merely imitate, but creates under the influence and impression of objects from his innermost self, from the nature within him.

In this sense must be understood the words of Goethe: "The very thing in works of art which strikes uneducated persons as most like nature, is not nature (from without), but man (nature from within)."[2]

The artist of genius idealises the object he reproduces, but does he thereby become untrue and unnatural? Is he not rather then just to the thing when, in pursuing the intentions of nature, he perfects, completes, idealises

[1] *Childe Harold*, III, 72. — [2] *Criticisms, Reflections, and Maxims*, p. 243.

it, renders it more beautiful or characteristic than it appears in fact to the prosaic eye?

We have pointed out above that from among the large number of sense-impressions that continually stream in upon us, our mind, influenced by our interest, makes a selection, so that some sensations are drawn into the bright light of consciousness, while others are forced into the background and obscured. We saw further that a selfish interest leads a man to see in things only certain external characteristics of practical importance, whereas the disinterested man regards things for their own sake, and hence looks at them from every point of view and notes their essential features. But things do not exist merely for the superficial observer, rather they are something in themselves, they have an inner life that they reveal only to him who is absorbed in them, whose soul goes out to them. If therefore the artist represents only that which is purely external, only the entirely superficial impression things make upon him, he has not represented the things themselves, but only his superficial, subjective impression.

The narrow-minded man regards everything merely in its relation to his own person, the object itself therefore continues to be a thing apart from him, and only its outward, subjective impression remains. If an artist of this kind sees in some fragment of nature, and on the most cursory observation, only blots of colour, he paints merely these blots and then takes immense pride to himself for his fidelity to nature. That things do not consist only of spots of colour, but have an independent, firmly outlined form, he does not, according to his ideas, require to know, it does not concern him. It is not the things themselves that interest him, but only the very superficial external impression that he obtains of them. Nay, he

sometimes actually hates the things, purposely selecting their ugly aspects, their paltry features, all that is imperfect, formless and faulty in them. Of certain inferior products of modern art one might say without hesitation: so only could Hate paint and poetise.

The artistic genius who is not confined merely to a subjective, external impression, but who enters into things with all his soul, who penetrates into their inner character, and tries to grasp, not their accidental, external form alone, but rather their nature and essence, such an artistic genius will not emphasise that which is imperfect, formless, and faulty, but on the contrary, that which is perfect, full of form, and characteristic in them. For their nature and essence consist in that which is perfect and not in that which is faulty, since their existence itself depends upon the very highest perfection, while their defects imply their destruction. All that is faulty arises by outward disturbance, all perfection is the outcome of the innermost nature of the thing itself.

To a crystal, for instance, which shapes itself out of a cooling mass, form is absolutely essential, and this form shows a great perfection and faultless mathematical exactitude. Nevertheless, in reality a crystal seldom attains to perfection of form, as it is hindered in its development by other crystals growing on to it, or by other unfavourable outward factors. But even in an imperfect crystal, in a fragment, a remnant, the man of science will still recognise the perfect form that is an essential of the crystal in question. So also the artistic genius sees in things, not the form that they bear accidentally, but that form which is essential to them, which they ought to have. He sees in things the ideal which they strive to attain, the Idea, and represents

this. Hence "the Platonic Idea" is called by Schopenhauer "the Object of Art."[1]

The eye of love sees what is perfect. There is a bond between love and perfection as there is between hatred and imperfection. This is expressed in noble words by Schiller in his "Philosophical Letters," where he says: "Once we perceive excellence, it is ours. Once we become intimate with the high ideal Unity, we shall be drawn to one another in brotherly love. If we plant beauty and joy we shall reap beauty and joy. If we think clearly we shall love ardently. 'Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect,' says the Founder of our Faith. Weak human nature turned pale at this command, therefore He explained Himself in clearer terms: 'Love one another!'"[2]

Love makes perfect. To love, to desire the existence of another, is at the same time to desire that which belongs to such existence, the conditions of existence. But every defect makes existence more difficult, every perfection makes it easier. To desire a thing to exist, therefore, is at the same time to desire that there may be no defect in it, that it may fulfil its purpose, its idea, that it may be perfect as far as possible. Hence when we love a thing, we always lay stress on its perfections, on those characteristics which realise its purpose, its idea. When we hate a thing, we chiefly see all that excludes or obstructs its existence, that is, everything defective, faulty, imperfect, ugly, aimless, and stupid.

What else therefore will a Raphael, with his heart full of divine love, see in a landscape, but all that is harmonious, in concord, coherent, and ideal? The distant contours of the mountains, the towering masses of cloud, the rocks in the foreground, the meandering course of the river,

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. I, p. 217.
[2] *Æsthetical and Philosophical Essays*, p. 390.

the dark wood, all these can be seen in their lights and shadows, their colours and their lines, in a thousand different ways. If thousands of artists were to look at the same object, each one would see it in his own manner. For no object makes one single unchanging impression, but rather each impression made by an object is composed of many single impressions that cannot possibly be simultaneously and fully perceived. There is always a selection made among the impressions, and this selection is connected with the whole personality of the observer. Every individual sees only that which is congenial to him.

But what is perfection? It is that state in which all the conditions of existence are present. And what are these conditions? On what is the existence of an object based? *It is based on the harmonious concord of its parts.* For all things are compound, consisting of single parts through whose co-operation alone the living whole is formed. As soon as any one part becomes detached, the destruction of the whole sets in, unless the deficiency be made good. Now, the more perfectly the single parts harmonise together, the more will the whole be capable of existence, the more will it have reality. Hence Spinoza could say, "By reality and perfection I understand the same thing."[1]

Let us, for example, consider a living human body, as it is presented to the eye. Head and trunk are in harmonious relation; we see how each single limb is attached to the trunk, in these the members of which the limbs are composed, and in the latter again, as in the trunk and head, numerous muscles and ligatures, all operating in concert to produce a harmonious whole, and the more perfect they are, the better they answer their

[1] *Ethic*, p. 48. — "Dixi me per realitatem et perfectionem idem intelligere."

purpose, the more completely their movements are adapted to each other, the more will strength and grace appear in the vigorous outward activity, in the motions of the whole. The observer who is æsthetically, lovingly absorbed in this marvel of creation, will view with pleasure every perfection in it, and every defect with dissatisfaction. For every defect, every stunted limb, every stiff and awkward movement mars the idea of the whole, diminishes the perfection of the object, obstructs its existence, is a step towards the annihilation of the whole. But love makes not for killing, but for helping things to live. To love is to desire the existence of another, is to desire that which is the essence of existence, namely, the harmonious co-operation of all the parts towards one whole, which is perfection.

As with the crystal, so also with the human body, it is only accidental, external hindrances that stand in the way of the harmonious development of the whole. If these external, marring influences had not interfered, the crystal, like the human body, would have developed normally; for in the thing itself lies the striving after existence, the will to live, and with it also the yearning for the essentials of existence, for the most perfect development of its parts. The inner truth that is grasped by that deeper insight of the mind of genius which penetrates into the nature of things, the inner truth in the crystal as in the human body, is therefore not the stunted, the inharmonious, the defective in the whole, but that which is arranged strictly after some design, and is perfect and harmonious, in other words, that which gives æsthetic pleasure to the eye. Beauty is living unity impressing itself on us through sensation.

Just as in judging the character and actions of a man we must in fairness take into consideration his dis-

position also, that is, not only what he has actually done, but also what he has hoped and striven to do, without perhaps having succeeded, so the artist will do justice to a thing only when he sees and represents not merely what it has actually become under stress of unpropitious circumstances, and only when he penetrates more deeply into the essence of the thing, and sees and gives expression to that for which the object is destined by its inner nature. This is what is called by Schopenhauer, Spinoza, Goethe, Plato, and other inspired poets and thinkers the Idea of a thing, its ideal.

The ideal, therefore, is not something unnatural, something artificially constructed, on the contrary, it is nature itself in its inmost being. If all things had only an outside, if they were all merely empty vessels, husks without kernels, the extreme representatives of the naturalistic school would be right in representing only the accidental, superficial, outward semblance. But as nature has also a kernel, something within itself that forms its very essence, — the real nature of nature so to say, — the name of naturalism sounds like mockery and derision when used in reference to a school which neglects precisely that inner essence of nature, its striving after existence, its desire for life, its impulse towards perfection. In like manner the name of realism for this kind of art is wholly inappropriate. For, according to Spinoza, reality and perfection in a thing are identical, seeing that the more perfectly shaped it is in all its parts, the more capacity for existence, the more vital truth, and the more reality it will possess.

This false realism, in contrast to what its name is meant to convey, prefers to see in things that only which reduces their reality, their capacity for existence, all that is defective, faulty, common, ignoble, or ugly. One often

observes in life that uncharitableness notices all defects, makes them as conspicuous and emphatic as possible, whereas love, on the other hand, seeks out what is good, sees and commends the beautiful. Many a *blasé* modern artist approaches things with indifference, nay, with repugnance and contempt, and hence his delight in depicting that which is awkward, ugly, jejune, common, or clumsy. He finds pleasure in seeking out and gathering together all the defects in nature, like the wicked man who makes a jest of the nakedness of a beggar, instead of finding him the wherewithal to cover it.

The same principle holds good in all provinces of the beautiful. Whether it be a landscape we are looking at or the characters and fates of men, whether we study the marvellous structure of the human body, or listen to the song of the birds, the rustling of the forest, or the music of the human voice, it is always our hearts, our wishes that decide the impression things produce on us.

Who has not at one time or another in his own experience, on meeting with an unhoped-for piece of good fortune or having a long-fostered, fervent desire suddenly realised, observed that the whole world immediately appeared to him in brighter colours, that everything at once seemed to him beautiful, good, and excellent, that he felt more kindly disposed and more ready to excuse the faults and failings of others; and found, on the other hand, that misfortune made him bitter, that everything was instantly seen in a gloomy light and appeared to him ugly and mean? And why so? Because mankind is always inclined to look upon good fortune as a benefit, and upon misfortune as an injustice. A benefit awakens love, an injustice hatred. The happy man sees beauty everywhere, because he sees with the eyes of love; to the unhappy man the world is ugly, because his eye is clouded by hatred.

We must therefore never forget that it is not only in everyday life that love makes existence bearable and elevates it more and more to the full consciousness of a crowning happiness; it is love which even in their mere outward appearance reveals the deeper nature of things — that deeper nature which even under the plainest covering shines forth in divine beauty to the seeing eye. *Genius is love.*

II.

PHILOSOPHIC ASPIRATION OF THE MAN OF GENIUS.

"GENIUS is simply the completest objectivity," are Schopenhauer's words; but objectivity is explained by him as "the objective tendency of the mind, as opposed to the subjective, which is directed to one's own self — in other words, to the" selfish "will."[1] Subjectivity and self-seeking are identical, as are objectivity and love. Hence artistic genius depends on the objectivity with which impressions of the senses and the imagination are received, in other words, its essence lies in the artist's love for the object before him.

To love is to desire the existence of a thing, to desire that on which its existence depends, on which its being is based. The existence of an object again is based on its perfection, and this is identical with the harmonious and uniform co-operation of all the various parts of the thing. Hence to love an object is to desire its capability of existence, its being built up of parts, perfectly, harmoniously, uniformly and systematically. Now, the total external sense-impression we receive from the harmonious organisation and purposeful arrangement of the various parts of an object is that of beauty, charm, grace.

[1] *The World as Will and Idea.* vol. I, p. 240.

In the contemplation of an object we see in it for the most part what we desire to see. We always direct our attention to those points in the object that are interesting to us, whereas we neglect or at most only superficially notice those features in which we take no interest. When we love an object, we see with interest everything in it which makes it fit to exist, which makes it perfect and its outward appearance beautiful; when we hate an object, those things in it interest us which make it incapable of existence, which make it imperfect, which make its outward appearance ugly. Love sees in an object all that is beautiful, hatred all that is ugly.

The essence of things is not based on their imperfection, but on their perfection; for in the essence of all things lies the desire to exist, to be, to live. To all existence, to all life, perfection is necessary, that is, a harmonious and uniform co-operation of the parts of which each thing is composed. But if the essence, the real nature of all things consists in their striving after existence and therefore after perfection, the artist will the better grasp and succeed in representing that essence and real nature of the object before him, in proportion as he takes the more interest in its perfection of outward expression, that is, in its beauty, charm, and grace. The artist who idealises real things in the right manner will become thereby not untrue, but really true to nature.

On the other hand, the artist will the more easily fail to appreciate the essence, the nature of the things to be represented, in proportion as he is inclined to give attention and prominence to their deficiencies, uglinesses, deformities, and faults; and to the same degree his efforts will be untrue and unnatural.

Artistic genius is identical with the objectivity with which we receive impressions. The artistic genius grasps

the essence, the nature of things as it is impressed on the senses and on the imagination. Hence the words of Goethe: "The first and last thing that is demanded of genius is love of truth."[1] For in all things truth is just what constitutes their real essence, their nature.

Now, what is *philosophical* genius? If genius in general is to be defined as objectivity, disinterestedness, love, then *philosophical* genius must be defined as objectivity, disinterestedness, love in thinking. But what is thinking, and how is egotistical thinking distinguished from disinterested thinking, narrow-minded thinking from thinking that is inspired by genius?

We have already seen that a certain measure of perfection is necessary to the existence of every thing; the more systematic and uniform the arrangement of the parts of which a thing is composed, and the more harmoniously those parts co-operate, the more capable of life, of existence will the whole be, the more reality, or actuality will it possess. We remember the saying of Spinoza that actuality, existence, reality, and perfection are identical. Now, the perfection, vital activity, or actuality of a thing can, firstly, be seen with our eyes, heard with our ears, touched with our hands; that is, we can receive a sense-impression of it. This actuality or perfection which impresses our senses, we call beauty. But we can, secondly, form a general notion, an idea, a conception of the actuality or perfection of a thing without letting the thing in question directly affect our senses or imagination. This general notion, idea, or conception is then in itself ordered and arranged just as the sense-impression is; that is to say, the general notion, idea, or conception is made up of a number of component notions, ideas, or conceptions in the same manner as the complete sense-im-

[1] *Criticisms, Reflections, and Maxims*, p. 224.

pression of an object is made up of a number of separate sense-impressions.

For instance, the impression produced on our sense of vision by a living human body is composed of the many impressions made by the various parts of that body upon our sense of vision. Our attention is attracted successively by the head, the trunk, the limbs; in observing the head again we specially notice the hair, the brow, the eyes, the nose, mouth, ears, and chin; in the eyes, perhaps the vivid colouring of the iris, the large pupils, or the long black lashes may attract our notice; in short, a large number of separate visual impressions make up the total impression we receive of a human body, and the more completely all its single parts harmonise together, the more full of life will the whole be and the more beautiful will it appear to us.

Similarly, the idea of the human body is composed of many ideas, each of which corresponds to one of its parts. To acquire a general idea of the human body, we must have a large number of general ideas of its single parts and of their co-operation, — ideas, for instance, of the trunk, the limbs and the head. The conception of each of these parts again demands separate conceptions of the parts of each part. A knowledge of such a limb as the arm involves a knowledge of the shoulder-blade, upper arm, forearm, and hand. A knowledge of the hand again must take into account the wrist, palm, and fingers; to the conception of a finger belong those of its single joints; to the conception of the last joint of a finger the various conceptions of its nail, skin, final tendon, adipose and cellular tissue, bone, blood-vessels, and nerves. If we go farther, we find that to the conception of the nervous system of the hand belong the conceptions of the sensory, motory, and sympathetic nerves, that is, of the

nerves that regulate sensation, motion, and the vascular system. The conception of a sensory nerve next involves conceptions of the terminal organ lying under the surface of the skin or of the tactile corpuscle and of the conductor nerve-fibre; the conception of a conductor nerve-fibre that of the actual nerve-substance, or axial cylinder, and of the integument of the nerve-fibre; the conception of the actual nerve-substance involves the conceptions of its many constituent albuminous molecules and their chemical properties; that of each albuminous molecule again the conceptions of the various intricately grouped atoms that compose it.

Hence it will be seen that the conception of a human body is by no means a simple affair, but is immensely varied and complicated, exactly corresponding to the real existence of the body, always supposing that these conceptions are correctly formed.

This *correct formation of conceptions*, however, is the function of science. For the prosecution of a science, a man requires an objective, free and disinterested mind, a mind unfettered by personal aims and considerations, — a mind, in short, that is capable of concentrating all its interest on the object in question and its investigation. For a subjective interest only sees the object in the light of some conception that has a direct, practical value for the observer.

Is the butcher interested in the fine anatomical structure of the animal he is slaughtering? Certainly not, he sees only what his trade demands, the amount of meat, fat, and bone he can obtain in cutting up the animal, and the pecuniary profit he can realise by its sale. Has he in the exercise of his trade a true and complete conception of the animal's body? Evidently he has only a quite one-sided, imperfect one, not wrong in itself, but of which it

would be absurd to say that it coincides with a conception of the essentials of the animal's body. To the butcher this carcase in itself is not so interesting that he feels impelled to examine into its finest, microscopic structure; for him the interest consists only in the profit that he may derive from its meat, and therefore he will give thought to it only in so far as it has practical importance for him.

But the true nature of the animal does not lie in the fact that it is a possible source of profit to the butcher and that it may serve as an article of food for man; the animal has an existence of its own, it is there for its own sake, it desires to live, and not to be slaughtered and eaten. And this impulse towards existence finds expression in the whole structure of its body down to the minutest details, in the system of bones that lends stability and firmness to the body, in the ligatures and muscles that connect and bind the framework of the body into a whole, in the nervous system that receives and classifies impressions from the outer world and sets the muscular system in motion, in the vegetative organs, in the vascular system, etc. Therefore, to form as clear and as perfect an idea of the body of an animal as possible, is really to form a clear and reasonably complete idea of its capacity for existence, of its capacity to live. A man sets his whole mind, however, only on that which interests him. If he takes no interest in the existence of living creatures, it will be quite immaterial to him what the conditions of their existence are, that is to say, the structure of their bodies in the minutest details, the co-operation of the parts, the activity of the various organs, and so on.

The things of the outer world act in the first place upon our senses, but they set to work our reasoning faculty also. We seek to understand the things of the outer

world, we think about them, and try to explain them to ourselves. Now, the more self-seeking a man is, the more will he regard each object with reference to himself, and think only of the possible advantage that object may have for him. What does not affect the person of the egoist is of no interest to him; he reflects no further on it and therefore remains stupid and narrow-minded. The more disinterested, on the other hand, a man is, the more will he incline to occupy himself with things for their own sake; not only when his personal advantage compels him to do so, but whenever time and opportunity allow, he will try to reach the heart of things and to understand their relations to one another.

Such an endeavour we call a philosophical one. The more disinterested, objective, full of genius a man is, the more strongly-marked will this philosophical aspiration also be in him, and it then depends only on time and opportunity whether and in how far his desire will be carried out. The man of genius, who takes an interest in things themselves, to whom everything is interesting even when his own profit is not concerned, will at any moment be ready to acquire information. He will be quick to seize wisdom, and sometimes grasp knowledge suddenly and without any effort, while the subjectively interested man only attains it by the sweat of his brow and by protracted study. The former instructs himself, because the instruction gives him pleasure, the latter does so only on compulsion, because the knowledge is demanded by his business, profession, or branch of study. "Wisdom lies only in truth,"[1] says Goethe, namely, in the truth and purity of sensation, thought, and will.

The essence of things does not lie on the surface, on the contrary, it lies in their innermost selves. To attain an

[1] *Criticisms, Reflections, and Maxims*, p. 155.

insight into things we must become absorbed in them. But a continuous energy of mind such as can only be called forth by the liveliest interest in the object itself, is requisite for this absorption. This is why a narrow-minded man is always so quick with his opinion. He has not enough love for the object to make him take it seriously. He observes only in so far as his personal, subjective interest compels him to do so and any further effort of observation is boredom to him. He therefore seeks to come to a conclusion about the object as quickly as possible, and is eager to have done with it.

In this connection Schopenhauer says: "The common mortal, that factory-product of Nature which she turns out by the thousand every day, is, as we have said, not capable, at least not continuously so, of observation that in every sense is wholly disinterested, as contemplation, strictly so-called is. He can turn his attention to things only so far as they have some relation, no matter how remote, to his" — selfish — "will. Since in this attitude of mind, which never demands anything but the knowledge of relations, the abstract conception of the thing is sufficient, and for the most part even better adapted for use, the ordinary man does not linger long over the mere perception, does not fix his attention long on one object, but in all that is presented to him hastily seeks merely the concept under which it is to be brought, as the lazy man seeks a chair, and then it interests him no further. This is why he is so soon done with everything, with works of art, objects of natural beauty, and indeed everywhere with the truly significant contemplation of all the scenes of life. He does not linger, only seeks to know his own way in life, together with all that might at any time become his way. Thus he makes topographical notes in the widest sense of the word; over the

consideration of life itself as such, he wastes no time. The man of genius, on the other hand, whose excessive power of knowledge frees it at times from the service of " — his selfish — " will, dwells on the consideration of life itself and strives to comprehend the Idea of each thing."[1]

He who looks at a thing hastily and superficially has no idea of its real nature. He recognises only the casual impression that the thing makes upon him. If the things of this world were mere empty shells, the narrow-minded man would be right in only concerning himself superficially about them; but they are, on the contrary, something in themselves, they have an existence, a life of their own, and to understand them, we must mentally transplant ourselves into them. The whole essence of things consists in their striving after existence, in their desire to live. This doctrine is expressed in Spinoza's statement: "The effort by which each thing endeavours to persevere in its own being is nothing but the actual essence of the thing itself."[2]

This general striving after existence, this desire to live, exhibits itself in different ways in different things. One thing desires to exist in one way, another in another way. The striving after existence remains the same in all; only the *form* of existence is different. A fish strives after existence exactly as a bird, a man, a plant, or a crystal does, but each thing seeks to realise this effort in a different *form*. This difference in the forms of existence is based on the difference in the composition of the parts of each object. For each single thing in this world is composed of parts, and the manner of their

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. I, pp. 242-3.

[2] *Ethic*, p. 114. — " Conatus, quo unaquaeque res in suo esse perseverare conatur, nihil est praeter ipsius rei actualem essentiam."

composition determines the special nature of the thing. The more complicated this composition, the higher stands the life of the object in question. The parts of which a thing is composed are quite definitely related to each other.

Now, if we can form a correct mental picture of the parts of an object and of their relations to one another, then we can say that we have grasped the idea of that object. This idea, however, is not only a creation of our own brains, but is at the same time the special nature of the thing itself. Spinoza expresses this when he says: "The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things." [1] For every object strives not only after existence in general, but simultaneously after some particular form of existence. In other words, every aspiration has some end in view, there is a direction to every movement, and every effort of will is accompanied by an idea of what is willed. Will is not "blind." In everything the striving after existence, the wish to live, is based on a plan or an idea which the thing endeavours to realise during its existence. To investigate an object scientifically, philosophically, is to comprehend its total idea, the plan according to which the object forms itself out of its component parts, or to analyse it into those partial ideas of which the whole consists; it is to reproduce in one's own mind that plan on which the life and action of the object is founded, whether that object be a molecule which is composed of atoms, or a nation which is composed of individuals.

Since, however, no single thing can develop and maintain itself unhindered by disturbing influences, so also nothing can ever fully correspond to that plan, that

[1] *Ethic*, p. 52. — "Ordo et connexio idearum idem est ac ordo et connexio rerum."

idea, the realisation of which is the aim of its existence. No single thing can in its outward actuality entirely correspond to the idea that lies at the foundation of its own nature; for each thing is at the same time the product of its own inner formative impulse, and of accidental and external circumstances which may favour this formative impulse, but which may also retard it. He who merely interests himself superficially in an object, without entering more fully into its nature, will fail to distinguish between that which is imperfect or not in accordance with the idea, the plan, the form of its existence, and that which is perfect or in harmony with its actual nature.

Now, the essential mark of genius is this absorption in the real nature of objects; genius is the spirit "who prizes only the depths of being." In his objective interest in the life, in the existence of all things, the attention of the man of genius will always be attracted by that on which every existence chiefly depends, the idea, the plan; and he will therefore carefully distinguish between the healthy and the unhealthy, the perfect and the imperfect, the normal and the perverted. For, as Schopenhauer expresses it, "the actual objects are almost always very imperfect copies of the Ideas expressed in them; therefore the man of genius requires imagination in order to see in things, not that which Nature has actually made, but that which she endeavoured to make, yet could not because of the conflict of her forms among themselves."[1]

In so much as objective interest or love lies in a man, in so much will there be the impulse in him to do justice to things in his thoughts of them. The philosophical endeavour of the man of genius will aim at form-

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. I, p. 241.

ing as clear and distinct a conception as possible of the universe in which he has his own position as a part of an infinite whole. With the comprehension of the ideas, of the nature of things, his own nature will become more and more revealed to him. He will recognise the connection between all existing things, that divine unity that is alike manifest in his own body and mind, in the life of the plant, and in the movements of the stars. Goethe, in his poem "One and All" *(Eins und Alles)*, has mirrored this feeling of the thinking man of genius:

"To find himself in boundless spaces,
Each one with joy himself effaces;
There weariness is put to flight.
Not wild desires, high aspirations,
Not irksome claims, strict obligations,
But self-surrender is delight.

Come, universal soul, inspire us!
That with the world-spirit it may fire us
To struggle, as our highest call.
Then perfect masters will instruct us,
Then kindly spirits will conduct us
To Him that made and fashioned all.

To recreate what is created,
Lest ever it become stagnated,
Forms living work that will remain.
What never was will now be moulded,
As bright-hued worlds, pure suns unfolded;
'T may ne'er be suffered rest to obtain.

It must be stirred, act by production,
First take a shape, then reconstruction;
It only seems at times to rest.

Eternal power in all 's exerted;
For all to nothing is converted,
When for its life it will contest."[1]

The philosophical endeavour of the man of genius will approach ever more and more towards a comprehension of the spiritual unity of all being, towards the great truth which is the goal of all deeper minds. The natural sciences have already taught us that an inviolable order reigns throughout the universe, that an eternal obedience to law obtains in all phenomena, and that an extraordinary uniformity exists in all multitudinousness throughout innumerable changes, and each year brings further confirmation of the lesson. The latest great advance in this direction has been made by experiments which have proved that electricity is subject to the same laws as light. Electricity, mag-

[1] "Im Gränzenlosen sich zu finden,
Wird gern der Einzelne verschwinden,
Da lös't sich aller Überdruß;
Statt heißem Wünschen, wildem Wollen,
Statt läst'gem Fordern, strengem Sollen,
Sich aufzugeben ist Genuß.

Weltseele komm uns zu durchdringen!
Dann mit dem Weltgeist selbst zu ringen
Wird unsrer Kräfte Hochberuf.
Teilnehmend führen gute Geister,
Gelinde leitend, höchste Meister,
Zu dem, der alles schafft und schuf.

Und umzuschaffen das Geschaffne,
Damit sich's nicht zum Starren waffne,
Wirkt ewiges, lebendiges Tun.
Und was nicht war, nun will es werden,
Zu reinen Sonnen, farbigen Erden;
In keinem Falle darf es ruhn.

Es soll sich regen, schaffend handeln,
Erst sich gestalten, dann verwandeln;
Nur scheinbar steht's Momente still.
Das Ewige regt sich fort in allen:
Denn alles muß in nichts zerfallen,
Wenn es im Sein beharren will."

netism, and light are all based upon the undulatory motion of the particles of that finest imponderable substance, Ether, which fills all the space of the universe. Electricity, magnetism, and light again are only different forms of that same force which lifts our arm and which we recognise in ourselves as conscious energy, or will. In the Urania Institution at Berlin there is a small dynamo which, on being set in motion with one hand, converts the power of our arm into electric power; this electrical power is further conducted through the spirals of an incandescent lamp where it is converted into illuminating power or light. When we turn the crank of the little dynamo vigorously, the electric incandescent lamp radiates the brightest light. The light that reaches our eye from the most distant fixed star, from the remotest nebula in space, as we gaze rapt in wonder on the star-filled heavens, is naught but the very same energy that finds expression in our own being and existence. Hence the words of Goethe:

> "Were not the eye like to the sun,
> It could not look upon his splendour.
> How could the godlike raise in us delight,
> Did we not to God's power surrender?" [1]

The glimmer of a nebula, of a world in course of development in the realms of endless space, bears mute witness to the fact of our being a part of that force which permeates the whole universe. And as we ourselves aspire to shape our life according to a plan, and not to leave the development of our life to the despotism of chance, so also does that world in embryo, which appears

[1] "Wär' nicht das Auge sonnenhaft,
Die Sonne könnt es nicht erblicken.
Läg' nicht in uns des Gottes eigne Kraft,
Wie könnt' uns Göttliches entzücken?"

to our eyes merely as a tiny luminous speck in the heavens, those immense masses of glowing gas, strive to assume form and shape. The gaseous masses condense, conglomerate into spheres; suns and planets arise and revolve round one another in orbits prescribed by an immutable law. But this first form is only the beginning of a series of innumerable metamorphoses of matter and energy. The formative impulse shows itself anew in the generation of crystals, plants, and animals. Everything lives and moves and presses ever onward to some higher state of existence, to finer and still finer development of its forms and forces. In his verses "Soul of the Universe" (*Weltseele*) Goethe gives us a poetic picture of this unceasing transformation that goes on in all things, and of the attitude of the man of genius who feels himself at one with all:

"Now from this hallowed feast part ye asunder,
Into all realms disperse,
And through the nearest zones in rapture wander,
To fill the universe!

Dreaming of bliss like gods, your pathway choosing
In distances remote,
In pairs among the stars new light diffusing,
Through luminous tracts ye float.

As mighty comets ever onward tending
Through far and farther space;
The maze of planets and of suns, unending,
Crosses the course ye trace.

Of worlds unformed swiftly ye take possession,
Shaping them with new force,
Supplying them with life in due progression
And regulated course.

And circling through the air that moves unbidden,
The shifting veil unfold,
And to the stone prescribe, where it lies hidden,
Its never changing mould.

Now all things with a godlike bold ambition
T'excel each other strive;
The barren water even seeks fruition,
Each mote becomes alive.

Then scatter ye, in generous contending,
Night's moist and vaporous gloom!
Now gleams of paradise the view unending,
In variegated bloom.

Soon rises up a multifarious legion,
To see the light so fair,
And wond'ring ye behold the blessed region,
As first-created pair.

Soon ceases then the limitless endeavour
In mutual happy glance.
With thanks ye gain the fairest life for ever,
The love that doth entrance." [1]

Goethe himself writes of these verses to Zelter: "The poem dates from the time when an overflowing youthful

[1] Verteilet euch nach allen Regionen
Von diesem heil'gen Schmaus!
Begeistert reißt euch durch die nächsten Zonen
In's All und füllt es aus!

Schon schwebet ihr in ungemeß'nen Fernen
Den sel'gen Göttertraum,
Und leuchtet neu, gesellig, unter Sternen
Im lichtbesäten Raum.

Dann treibt ihr euch, gewaltige Kometen,
In's Weit' und Weitr' hinan,
Das Labyrinth der Sonnen und Planeten
Durchschneidet eure Bahn.

courage still identified itself with the universe, and thought to fill its space, nay, to reproduce it in its parts."

This feeling of being at one with the universe, this finding of oneself again in all things, in the very forces of nature, in all that lives and moves and has its being, is highly characteristic of the philosophical mode of thought of the man of genius. Schopenhauer has described the manner in which genius views the essential equality of all things in the following words: "If we consider the phenomena of the inorganic world attentively, if we observe the strong and unceasing impulse with which the waters hurry to the ocean, the persistency with which the magnet turns ever to the north pole, the readiness with which iron flies to the magnet, the eagerness with which the electric poles seek to be re-united, and which, just like human desire, is increased by obstacles; if we

Ihr greifet rasch nach ungeformten Erden
Und wirket schöpfrisch jung,
Daß sie belebt und stets belebter werden,
Im abgemeß'nen Schwung.

Und kreisend führt ihr in bewegten Lüften
Den wandelbaren Flor,
Und schreibt dem Stein in allen seinen Grüften
Die festen Formen vor.

Nun alles sich mit göttlichem Erkühnen
Zu übertreffen strebt;
Das Wasser will, das unfruchtbare, grünen
Und jedes Stäubchen lebt.

Und so verdrängt mit liebevollem Streiten
Der feuchten Qualme Nacht;
Nun glühen schon des Paradieses Weiten,
In überbunter Pracht.

Wie regt sich bald, ein holdes Licht zu schauen,
Gestaltenreiche Schar,
Und ihr erstaunt, auf den beglückten Auen,
Nun als das erste Paar,

Und bald verlischt ein unbegränztes Streben
Im sel'gen Wechselblick.
Und so empfangt, mit Dank, das schönste Leben
Vom All in's All zurück."

see the crystal quickly and suddenly take form with such wonderful regularity of construction, which is clearly only a perfectly definite and accurately determined impulse in different directions, seized and retained by crystallisation; if we observe the choice with which bodies repel and attract each other, combine and separate, when they are set free in a fluid state and emancipated from the bonds of rigidness; lastly, if we feel directly how a burden which hampers our body by its gravitation towards the earth, unceasingly presses and strains upon it in pursuit of its one tendency; if we observe all this, I say, it will require no great effort of the imagination to recognise, even at so great a distance"—from the inorganic bodies—"our own nature."[1]

The words of Christ, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it," are equally true in the domain of philosophy. He who gives up himself, he who is quite absorbed in philosophical contemplation of the world, will find his life again in an infinite and rich variety of forms, in a marvellous fulness and diversity; he will find his life again in all surrounding nature, as he will find it again in God, that indivisible and infinite Spirit, Who pervades and rules all nature. But he who transfers the centre of existence to his own tiny limited person, who in his egotism regards himself as the point round which the world revolves, as the most important object in all nature, robs himself of the recognition of the marvellous wealth surrounding him. Confined to his own finite, transitory person, exposed to every accident and stroke of fate, his attitude towards all nature is that of a stranger, nay, that of a foe, and in his anxious concern for his own frail existence, in the constant fear and care for a life that is the only one for him, he will be incapable of recognising that

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. I, p. 153.

very intimate connection which all life, and therefore also his own life, has with the life of nature, with the life of God. The abandonment of self, or love, is therefore not only the source of all beauty, but also of all wisdom and truth.

"God or Nature" Spinoza calls "that eternal and infinite Being;"[1] and he adds: "The more we understand individual objects, the more we understand God."[2] But Nature is the sum of all things, the totality of all individual beings; and God is one Spirit. How can the endless multiplicity of things be one and the same with this perfect, infinite, and indivisible Spirit?

It can be understood only on the assumption that God has yielded himself up in infinite love, that he has descended from the infinite fulness of his existence to take up his abode in some tiny being, in an atom, a cell, a crystal, a plant, or a man, like a king disguised in the garb of a beggar. Now, he who regards his present form as the only one, who in his egotistical isolation considers the life of his finite person as alone of value, resembles a king disguised as a beggar who really believes himself to be that beggar, and anxiously guards as his sole possession the tatters that he has only donned for an hour's masquerade.

Truth sets us free, free from all the anxiety and misery of our earthly being. But truth is the recognition of the fact that the individual, the single ego does not exist separately, is not isolated from all other existences, but that it lives in the life of all else; that all existences are only various forms, various gradations of that single primal existence which we call God. God is a spirit, and a spirit has ideas; but God's infinite wealth of ideas is identical with the infinite wealth of ideas which reveals itself in the objects of nature. We have already seen that each thing, each

[1] *Ethic*, p. 177. "Deum sive Naturam." — [2] Id., p. 270. — "Quo magis res singulares intelligimus, eo magis Deum intelligimus."

being in the world is based on an idea, a plan according to which it constructs and develops itself, and towards the realisation of which it continually strives during its entire existence, without ever wholly attaining it. These ideas and plans that are the foundation of the marvellous structure of all organisms, and which give direction to the energy, the instincts, and the desires in every thing or being, these ideas that are the essence of every object in nature are also the ideas of the thinking spirit of God. It is for the divinely gifted man, the man of genius, to recognise these ideas in things, and so in his thoughts to follow the thoughts of God. Hence Spinoza's statement, "The more we understand individual objects, the more we understand God."

Splendid and appropriate expression has been given by Schiller to this relation of the man of genius to the universe. In his "Philosophical Letters" he says, "All perfections in the universe are united in God. God and Nature are two magnitudes which are quite alike. The whole sum of harmonic activity which exists together in the divine substance, is in Nature, which is the image of this substance, separated into incalculable degrees, and measures, and steps. Nature is an infinitely divided God. Just as in the prism, a white ray of light is split up into seven darker shades of colour, so the divine personality or Ego has been broken into countless susceptible substances. As seven darker shades melt together, through a lens, into one clear pencil of light, so out of the union of all these substances a divine being would issue. The existing form of nature's fabric is the optical glass, and all the activities of spirits are only an endless play of colours of that simple divine ray. If it pleased Omnipotence some day to break up this prism, the barrier between it and the world would fall down, all spirits would be absorbed in *one* infinite spirit, all accords would flow together in *one*

common harmony, all streams would find their end in *one* ocean. The bodily form of nature was brought about by the attractive force of the elements. The attraction of spirits, varied and developed infinitely, would at length lead to the cessation of that separation or would produce God. An attraction of this kind is love." [1]

All science is based on the endeavour to attain to the final great recognition of the spiritual unity of all existing things; but without a love for nature there will be no striving towards a recognition of nature. He who makes a principle of self-seeking denies science and truth.

Valuable testimony to this effect has been afforded by two thinkers who were insane enough to sing the praises of crude self-seeking, and to cast contempt on love as a sign of a weak and slavish disposition. Both direct their venom also against science and truth, and both in doing so bear witness to the fact that love and truth are one, just as love and beauty are one, and that the subversion of either includes that of the other. Deny love, and you deny all knowledge.

These two thinkers who denied all disinterestedness and self-abnegation were Max Stirner and Friedrich Nietzsche. The former declares in his book "*Der Einzige und sein Eigentum*" (The Individual and his Property), "If there is really only one truth to which man must devote his life and his powers because he is a man, then he is subject to rule, to authority, to law, he is a bondsman. So long as you believe in truth, you do not believe in yourself; you are a servant, a mere religious man. Truth is dead, it is a mere letter, a word, material to be made use of. In itself it is worthless. Truths are phrases, expressions, words. When in combination, marshalled in rank and file, they form logic, science, philosophy." And Friedrich Nietzsche epit-

[1] *Æsthetical and Philosophical Essays*, p. 389.

omises all his wisdom in the motto of the oriental Order of Assassins: "Nothing is true, everything is allowed." He adds, "In sooth, *that* was *freedom* of thought, that was *taking leave* of the very belief in truth." [1] But "all science," according to him, "nowadays sets out to talk man out of his present high opinion of himself, as though that opinion had been nothing but a bizarre piece of conceit." [2]

We see from this that disinterestedness, self-abnegation, just as it leads to beauty, leads also to truth, and that no one can preach selfishness without at the same time attacking truth and science. The inmost nature of the disinterested man, of the man of genius, demands philosophical endeavour, the pursuit of knowledge, science, and truth. The philosophy of the egotist is an attempt to sign the death-warrant of philosophy, to declare all wisdom null and void, dead, vain, a mere toying with words.

The striving after truth or science Nietzsche seeks to combat and make contemptible as the "ascetic ideal," because to him the joyful, disinterested devotion to an impression, thought, or action cannot appear otherwise than as robbery committed on one's own personality, as an unwarrantable self-denial or "asceticism." "These two phenomena," says Nietzsche, "science and the ascetic ideal, both rest on the same basis, the basis of the same over-appreciation of truth, and consequently they are *necessarily* allies, so that, in the event of their being attacked, they must always be attacked and called into question together. A valuation of the ascetic ideal inevitably entails a valuation of science as well. Art" — in Nietzsche's sense of the word — "in which lying is sanctified and the *will for deception* has good conscience on its side, is much more fundamentally opposed to the ascetic ideal than is science." [3]

[1] *The Complete Works*, edited by O. Levy; vol. XIII, p. 195 (*The Genealogy of Morals*. Trans. by H. B. Samuel, 1910.) — [2] Id. p. 201. — [3] Id. p. 199.

Away, therefore, with all striving after truth, after science, and long life to falsehood and deception!

The absurdity of this mental attitude lies in the utter failure to perceive that precisely what is here called "asceticism" consists in joyful devotion to the cause of truth, in the very highest concentration of our personality, the most intense will, and the special confirmation of our innermost selves. Is Newton, who was entirely engrossed in his scientific pursuits and whose reply to the question how he had arrived at his famous discoveries, was "By ceaselessly thinking about them," is such a man to be called an *ascetic*, because his whole interest, his whole love, his whole life were dedicated to those very things, and not to an *antisophy* like that of Stirner and Nietzsche? Does not a Newton, precisely in this intense pursuit of definite paths in life, of definite trains of thought, show *his* special disposition, is he not for this very reason completely free and master of himself, hence utterly remote from all asceticism, in using his life as his own strong inclination demands? To act freely is to act according to the laws of one's own nature. To work out one's destiny according to the laws of one's own nature by obeying a powerful impulse either to search after truth or towards creative work in the field of art or ethics, is that what asceticism means? But for Stirner and Nietzsche, life and happiness consist only in the most reckless assertion of the meanest egotism. Such so-called philosophy, or rather antisophy, as well as pseudo-naturalistic art has become quite the fashion among men of narrow mind. However regrettable this may be, there is nevertheless something instructive in it; for it clearly shows how intimately man's view of earthly concerns is connected with the natural impulses of his heart, with his sympathy and antipathy, with his love and hate.

Schiller's beautiful poem may fitly close this chapter:

"Lifeless masses are we, when we hate;
Gods, when we cling in love to one another,
Rejoicing in the gentle bond of love.
Upwards this divinest impulse holdeth sway
Through the thousandfold degrees of creation
Of countless spirits who did not create.

Arm-in-arm, higher and still higher,
From the savage to the Grecian seer,
Who is linked to the last seraph of the ring,
We turn, of one mind, in the same magic dance,
Till measure, and e'en time itself,
Sink at death in the boundless, glowing sea.

Friendless was the great world's Master;
And feeling this, He made the spirit world,
Blessed mirrors of His own blessedness!
And though the Highest found no equal,
Yet infinitude foams upward unto Him
From the vast basin of creation's realm." [1]

[1] *Æsthetical and Philosophical Essays*, p. 390. —

"Tote Gruppen sind wir, wenn wir hassen,
Götter, wenn wir liebend uns umfassen,
Lechzen nach dem süßen Fesselzwang.
Aufwärts durch die tausendfachen Stufen
Zahlenloser Geister, die nicht schufen,
Waltet göttlich dieser Drang.

Arm in Arme, höher stets und höher,
Vom Barbaren bis zum griech'schen Seher,
Der sich an den letzten Seraph reiht,
Wallen wir einmüt'gen Ringeltanzes,
Bis sich dort im Meer des ew'gen Glanzes
Sterbend untertauchen Maß und Zeit.

Freundlos war der große Weltenmeister,
Fühlte Mangel, darum schuf er Geister,
Sel'ge Spiegel seiner Seligkeit.
Fand das höchste Wesen schon kein Gleiches
Aus dem Kelch des ganzen Wesenreiches
Schäumt ihm die Unendlichkeit."

III.

CONDUCT OF THE MAN OF GENIUS IN PRACTICAL LIFE.

GENIUS can develop in three directions, corresponding to man's threefold attitude towards the outer world that surrounds him. For, in the first place, a man allows the outer world to act upon his senses and imagination: he perceives. Secondly, he inwardly digests the impressions made upon him by the outer world by converting them into conceptions or ideas, and so suits them to that picture of the world that he himself has formed and that he carries with him in his mind: he thinks. Lastly, on the basis of the impressions which he has received and of the ideas into which he has converted them, he forms resolutions and gives effect to them by bringing about certain changes in the outer world: he acts. Sensation, conception, and action continually pass into one another, just as the conduct of the individual towards the surrounding outer world changes continually.

If one assumes a merely perceptive or a merely receptive attitude towards the impressions of the outer world, if an impression on the senses, or on the imagination, is all that one desires, and if this by itself suffices to cause pleasure, there arises what we call æsthetic, artistic sensation, the delight found in seeing and hearing alone. Our senses are generally the scouts thrown out by our own

interests in the service of some earnest labour or serious need. If the activity of the senses lacks this earnest purpose, such activity seems to be aimless, and becomes mere play. When we look merely for the sake of looking, that which we see becomes a mere spectacle to us. It cannot, however, be truthfully said that the activity of the senses without any practical purpose is in itself purposeless, but only that it is a purpose *unto itself*, that it exists for its own sake. It is on this delight in sensation alone, in the mere reception of the impressions of the outer world, that all beauty is based and all art; and artistic genius is the intensified capacity for assuming a disinterested, objective attitude towards these impressions, for devoting oneself to them with one's whole soul.

If a man maintains a purely thinking, comprehensive, reflective attitude, if he tries ever further to deepen that picture of the world which he has formed out of the most varied ideas, to unify it and shape it into a whole, if he tries to make the individual ideas or conceptions more and more clear to himself, combining and harmonising them, until he arrives at a coherent and consistent view of life, if a man, in other words, takes an interest in knowledge and understanding for themselves alone, and if these in themselves suffice to cause him pleasure, then we have what we call philosophical thinking. If we use our senses chiefly as the scouts of our mere practical interests, our thoughts become generally the strategists initiating the attack on the outer world, the attainment of some practical advantage. If a man finds pleasure in reflection and comprehension for their own sakes, his thinking apparently lacks earnest purpose, it appears useless, mere idle play. Hence the narrow-minded man with his purely practical attitude will be just as little inclined to take a philosopher seriously as he would an artist. But philo-

sophical genius is based on this exclusive interest in thought and cognition. Whoever is not absorbed in an idea with his whole mind and soul will never grasp it.

Now, is there also a way of acting which is an end unto itself, just as there is purely disinterested sensation and purely objective thinking? Certainly there is, namely that conduct which is not dictated by a subjective, one-sided interest, but which follows out an idea conceived by the disinterested, objective mind. If we do a thing with only a selfish purpose in view, it will be of little or no importance to us how the work is executed, so long as we derive our advantage from it. If our work does not interest us in itself, we shall try to get done with it as quickly as possible, and we shall occupy ourselves with it only in so far as is absolutely necessary for the preservation of our existence. Compulsory work is accompanied by great dislike on our part and will be performed as badly as possible. But to whatever extent our work is done for its own sake, to whatever extent we are objectively interested in what we do, in so far also will every advance, improvement and completion of our work be attended with pleasure. Work which in itself causes delight is executed as perfectly as possible. If genius is synonymous with love, then the mode of action of the man of genius will consist in doing what he does with all his soul, with a complete devotion to the work itself, be it what it may. The narrow-minded man is astonished at what is apparently child's-play to the genius, and does not see that it is in point of fact somewhat of the nature of *play*, since the man of genius takes pleasure in the work for itself and the actual, practical purpose falls more into the background. Anything done merely because it gives pleasure, an act performed solely for its own sake, we call play; so that, however strange it may sound, the more

a man's whole heart is in what he does and the more objective, disinterested, inspired by genius a man is in his action, the more will it acquire the nature of *play, of free activity, the aim or idea of which is centred in itself.*

The more a man, on the other hand, looks to what he hopes to attain by his work, the pecuniary profit it may yield, the satisfaction of his vanity, and similar ends, the less importance will he attach to the work itself, the greater will be the dislike combined with the performance of it, and the more imperfectly will it be executed. Even the convict condemned to hard labour must still take a certain objective interest in what he is set to do, he must be able to attach to his work some sensible meaning for which he has an objective, disinterested sympathy, if his aversion is not to become so unbearable a torment that he would at once choose death rather than the continuance of such a life.

In Dostoieffsky's celebrated "Memoirs from a House of the Dead" occurs the following subtle passage: "It once occurred to me that, if one desired to stifle and destroy a man completely, to inflict upon him so terrible a punishment that even the most dreadful murderer would shudder and shrink from the idea of it, nothing more would be required than to deprive his work, entirely and absolutely, of any purpose and meaning. Although the present hard labour is uninteresting and tedious to the convict, yet in itself, as labour, it is not meaningless; the convict makes bricks, digs up land, is employed as mason and builder; in such work there is meaning and purpose. The convict is even occasionally interested in it, he desires to work more skilfully, more quickly and better. But if he were ordered, for instance, to pour water from one tub into another and back again, or to pound sand, or

to carry a load of earth from one place to another and back again, I believe that the convict after a few days would strangle himself, or commit a thousand crimes solely in order to find death and an escape from such humiliation, disgrace, and torment."

The conclusion from this is that even the highest practical achievements of men of genius are founded only on an intensification of that capacity which exists in every human heart even though in various degrees, the capacity, namely, of preserving an objective, disinterested attitude towards one's own actions, in such a manner as to take pleasure in the work as such apart from the expectation of any use, advantage, or disadvantage to oneself. In proportion to the intensity of this capacity, the pleasure in the action itself, the energy with which the work is entered upon, the perseverance shown in its execution, and the prospect of a satisfactory result, are increased.

The greater the interest in the work itself, the greater also the interest in its perfect accomplishment. On what then is the excellence of a piece of work in general founded? All labour, all action, is based upon a more or less sensible purpose or idea. Now, the more completely the action answers this sensible purpose, the more sensible this purpose itself is and the more perfect the idea of the work, the higher also will be its excellence and perfection. The more a man is inspired by genius, the more will he be ready to sink himself in his work and to impress upon it an increasingly perfect character by adapting it to a more and more sensible purpose, a more and more perfect idea.

But on what is the greater or lesser perfection of an idea founded, on what the greater or lesser rationality of the purpose? It is founded in the first place on its

greater complexity, its finer development, and its fuller purport, and secondly, on its more comprehensive and general meaning. For instance, when a child at play piles up stones to build something, the idea of what it wishes to build is firstly only a quite indefinite, blurred, and vague fancy, in which there can be no question either of a fixed plan, or of any distinct order or arrangement; in the second place the child's uncertain, vague idea conveys no meaning at all. No one takes an interest in it except the child, and the child only for the time being. It soon grows tired of the game and throws away the stones. Nevertheless there can be no doubt that, in spite of the great vagueness and slight meaning in the idea on which the child's play is founded, that character of mental impartiality is already present, that character of freedom from any self-seeking purpose which gives the productions of men of high genius the sublime stamp of divine and unconstrained creative force.

This kinship of the child's unbiassedness in its play with the character and creative work of men of genius, has been repeatedly emphasised by great philosophers. Schopenhauer says on this matter: "Really every child is to a certain extent a genius, and the genius is to a certain extent a child. The relationship of the two shows itself primarily in the *naïveté* and sublime simplicity which is characteristic of true genius; and besides this it appears in several traits, so that a certain childishness certainly belongs to the character of the genius. In Riemer's '*Mitteilungen über Goethe*' (Communications concerning Goethe) (vol. I, p. 184) it is related that Herder and others found fault with Goethe, saying he was always a big child. Certainly they were right in what they said, but they were not right in finding fault with it. It has also been said of Mozart that all his life he remained a child (Nissen's

Biography of Mozart, p. 2 and 529). Schlichtegroll's '*Nekrology*' (for 1791, vol. II. p. 109) says of him: 'In his art he early became a man, but in all other relations he always remained a child.' Every genius is a big child for the very reason that he looks out upon the world as upon something strange, a play, and therefore with purely objective interest. Accordingly he has just as little as the child that dull gravity of ordinary men, who, since they are capable only of subjective interests, always see in things mere motives for their action. Whoever does not to a certain extent remain all his life a big child, but becomes a grave, sober, thoroughly composed, and reasonable man, may be a very useful and capable citizen of this world; but never a genius. In fact, the genius is such because that predominance of the sensible system and of intellectual activity which is natural to childhood maintains itself in him in an abnormal manner throughout his whole life, and thus becomes perennial. A trace of this certainly shows itself in many ordinary men up to the period of their youth; therefore, for example, a purely intellectual tendency and an eccentricity suggestive of genius is unmistakable in many students. But nature returns to her track; they assume the chrysalis form and reappear at the age of manhood, as incarnate Philistines, at whom we are startled when we meet them again in later years. Upon all this that has been expounded here depends Goethe's beautiful remark: 'Children do not perform what they promise; young people very seldom; and if they do keep their word, the world does not keep its word with them' (*Wahlverwandtschaften*, Pt. I, ch. 10) . . . In accordance with what has been said, as there is a mere beauty of youth, which almost everyone at some time possesses (*beauté du diable*), so there is a mere intellectuality of youth, a certain mental

nature disposed and adapted for apprehending, understanding, and learning, which everyone has in childhood, and some have still in youth, but which is afterwards lost, just like that beauty. Only in the case of a very few, the chosen, the one, like the other, lasts through the whole of life; so that even in old age a trace of it still remains visible: these are the truly beautiful and the men of true genius."[1]

In my short essay on "*Das Wesen des Genies*" published in 1888, I attempted to explain the deeper connection between the nature of the child and that of the man of genius as follows: "God is freedom absolute; the man of genius, created in His image, is as free as God; he is born to rule. Now, only the free, the unmoved man can rule, not he who himself is moved, drawn hither and thither, now attracted and then again repelled. But such dependence, such lack of freedom, sets in as soon as the mind attaches an absolute value to outward things and relations for the individual self, and consequently takes relations with the outer world seriously, that is, distinguishes between good and evil in a narrow-minded, self-seeking manner. The mind is then attracted by what it regards as absolutely good for and advantageous to the individual self, and is repelled by that which, regarded from the same standpoint, it considers bad and disadvantageous, and thus, instead of standing unmoved in the centre of things, and ruling from this point all that lies around it, the mind will be drawn into the dizzy whirlpool of self-seeking worldly relations, and will lose both itself and its likeness to God; for this likeness is based exclusively on the mind's inward freedom from conditions, and from every paltry and self-seeking interest. This is the fall of man, which begins with his

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. III, p. 163-4.

eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the knowledge of that which is to his own personal advantage or disadvantage, that is, which begins with his passing from the condition of childhood into that of the adult, who stands towards the outer world in fixed relations that serve his own self-seeking purposes.

"But man recovers his likeness to God, his inner freedom when he once more becomes like a child, entirely regardless of self-interest. In answer to the question of His disciples, who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, Christ called a little child unto Him, and set it in the midst of them, and said: 'Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' A child is distinguished in its nature from a grown-up man principally by the fact that, though outwardly it is weak and dependent, in its soul it is still free, because it does not yet take its own relations to this world seriously, because it does not yet distinguish unconditionally between what is good and what is bad for its own individual self, and because it resembles God in being inwardly free and unhampered by outward relations. Hence Christ also says of children: 'Their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven,' that is, the nature of the child stands in direct relation to the nature of God. The child only plays with things, it does not yet fetter its soul with definite relations, its soul is unrelated to outside things, it is free, bearing the image of God, it is still an end unto itself, it has an existence for itself, and therefore enjoys the blessedness and gaiety of the childish heart. Become a child again, break the bonds of those fixed relations which serve your selfishness, those bonds and fetters which hold down your eternal

soul to finite things, and you will regain your paradise, the paradise that you vainly sought for in the things of the outer world.

"The man of genius is a grown-up child. It is inherent in his nature to hold fast to what for others is only a transition period in their journey to an unhappy, hurried, pitiful life without dignity and worth of any nobler kind. When the man of genius attempts to follow the example of these others, he soon feels the misery of this state so keenly that he works his way back to his former point of view, and then develops an activity apparently similar to that of other men, but in which his inspired nature inwardly assumes a totally different attitude towards what he does or leaves undone, his actions being in truth only play, having no reference to his own individual self, whereas other people are clumsily and ridiculously in earnest about their own petty existence, an existence at the mercy of any and every accident. Hence the calm and great courage of the man of genius, his clear and unprejudiced outlook, his extraordinary boldness combined with the greatest coolness, his irresistible advance along the path he has once traced out for himself. He shatters and builds up empires with the same composure and calmness of mind with which the child takes his toys to pieces and puts them together again; he simply does not confound his soul with the object of his activity; what he does is done freely, it is play."

Schiller also, in his "Letters on the Æsthetical Education of Man," refers explicitly to the deeper significance of play: "For, to speak out once for all, man only plays when in the full meaning of the word he is a man, and *he is only completely a man when he plays.* This proposition, which at this moment perhaps appears paradoxical, will receive a great and deep meaning, if

we have advanced far enough to apply it to the twofold seriousness of duty and of destiny. I promise you that the whole edifice of æsthetic art and the still more difficult art of life will be supported by this principle."[1]

To return to the point from which we started, we said that the perfection of an idea lying at the root of any action depends in the first place on the degree of its complexity, on its inner development, arrangement and order, and secondly, on the greater or smaller extent of its significance. When a child heaps up stones in order to build something, in the first place, the idea that underlies this action is a perfectly vague and misty one, without inner arrangement or order, and, secondly, the child's action has a meaning only for the child itself, and even this meaning is only a fleeting one. But however vague and insignificant the child's idea of what it wishes to build may be, the idea that has sprung up in the child's own mind is yet its only standard while it is busy building. In its play it follows only its own inclination, it acts freely, the mere action in itself causes it pleasure, and it attaches to it no self-seeking and ulterior purpose.

On a much higher plane of perfection stands the fundamental idea of any form of sport. For here, in the first place, are represented quite definite objects, which are to be attained by the development of one's physical powers, and secondly, the attention of anyone who occupies himself with sport is claimed by it both permanently and intensely. The idea, however, on which any kind of sport is based is naturally of no great or wide significance. Whether Oxford or Cambridge win the Boat Race this year is, after all, of infinitesimal importance in the making of the world's history. But the pleasure with

1. *Æsthetical and Philosophical Essays*, p. 71.

which any kind of sport is gone in for is founded on the fact that every sport is pursued for its own sake, that here the action in itself contains its purpose and idea. And hand in hand with this goes the ever-increasing degree of perfection in all forms of sport. Whatever one enters on lovingly, with all one's heart and soul, must succeed. It is interesting to note that the greatest improvements that have taken place in shipbuilding in recent times are to be ascribed to the development of yachting.

On a higher plane than that of mere sport stands, of course, any practical occupation in life, because here, directly or indirectly, the weal or woe of a greater or lesser number of people is frequently affected, and because, as a result of the many circumstances demanding consideration in connection with it, the complexity of the idea on which the action is based becomes much greater. Whoever is a good sportsman, or a fine horseman, for instance, is far from having thereby proved his capacity to rule a people. But (what may sound quite paradoxical and yet is entirely in accordance with truth), every practical occupation in life can attain a high degree of perfection only when it is pursued as a game, a sport, with a love for the pursuit itself, without petty regard for oneself or for individuals and things that are extraneous to the plan or the idea to be realised.

Let us take, for instance, the work of a ruler, who stands in a thousand different relations to a great state of which he is the central figure. The idea that he has to realise, namely, the well-being and prosperity of that state, is an idea at once of the greatest complexity and of the greatest and widest significance, concerning as it does on the one hand the infinitely manifold functions of the state's vast organism, and on the other the weal and woe of perhaps many millions of human beings.

In what manner can the ruler most readily attain his object and realise most completely the idea on which his work is based? Evidently by taking the deepest possible interest in the rational aim of his activity, in the idea on which his actions are based, the well-being of the state itself, and by making this his highest standard of conduct, his first law. If then he looks upon all his duties as play to which body and soul are devoted with undivided attention, without wishing to extract from it any petty advantage for himself and unswayed by self-interested motives, he will do everything that is in any way calculated to promote the object and to realise the idea.

Now, since the idea of the well-being of the state is one of infinite complexity, as it must be in view of the immense variety in the functions of state-organism and in the people's interests, it is impossible for any single individual to master it in all its bearings, in all its most minute and separate details. He needs to have under him a number of capable and unusually gifted officials who devote themselves to separate branches of the administration, who thoroughly know and love their work and in consequence are able to perform it with particular success. And these individuals again will require others to assist them, and so on. The greater the love the ruler himself has for his task and the greater the objectivity and disinterestedness with which he aims only at the realisation of his idea, the more congenial will those men be to him who, like himself, perform their duties with pleasure and liking, whose whole minds are given to their work, who regard their profession as an art and who, creative and rich in new ideas, are constantly discovering new ways and means of achieving their aims. Such a ruler with such servants can perform

great things, and his name is handed down to posterity as that of a great man.

A very different picture is presented to us when the ruler's main motive is not love for his work, but love of the advantages accruing to himself from it, that is, when his work is no longer play in the higher sense of the word, but bitter and sober earnest.

Let us suppose, for instance, the case of a ruler who has set his mind on satisfying his personal vanity, on exhibiting his power, on making himself admired and feared, on parading his various talents, like the Roman emperor Nero, who even appeared on the stage as a singer and had himself applauded. Is such a ruler likely to be disinterestedly absorbed in the welfare of his people, indifferent as to his own personal advantage? Will he, like Frederick the Great, be disposed to declare himself merely the first servant of the state? On the contrary, his individual profit and the satisfaction of his personal vanity will be matters of chief importance to him. The aim of his actions will consequently not lie in the actions themselves, and hence there can be no question of a real absorption in an idea which is the basis of his practical activity. Everything, rather, will be treated as superficially as possible, only the surface skimmed, so to speak, and on the whole those things placed in the foreground and emphasised, which are calculated to make the man himself most conspicuous. People who thoroughly understand their business and delight in it, will naturally be objects of detestation to such a ruler. Their success will wound his vanity, their wealth of ideas confuse and vex him and seem useless ballast to him, their independence and initiative appear as encroachments on his power. In short, only those people will be congenial to him who, like himself, do their work in a dilettante fashion,

and consequently remain open to personal influences, — who therefore take no delight in their work for its own sake, but do it only with a view to personal advantage or because ordered to. Such rulers as a matter of course fail in the true object of their calling, which is the well-being of the state, since their hearts are set on quite different things. And fame, the very thing they are in pursuit of, eludes them. Their egotism itself defeats them.

"In general," says Schopenhauer, "he only is great who in his work, whether it is practical or theoretical, seeks *not his own concerns*, but pursues an *objective end* alone; he is so, however, even when in the practical sphere this end is a misunderstood one, and even if in consequence of this it should be a crime. *That he seeks not himself and his own concerns*, this makes him under all circumstances *great*. *Small*, on the other hand, is all action which is directed to personal ends; for whoever is thereby set in activity knows and finds himself only in his own transient and insignificant person. He who is great, again, finds himself in all, and therefore in the whole: he lives not, like others, only in the microcosm, but still more in the macrocosm. Hence the whole interests him, and he seeks to comprehend it in order to represent it, or to explain it, or to act practically upon it. For it is not strange to him; he feels that it concerns him. On account of this extension of his sphere he is called *great*. Therefore that lofty predicate belongs only to the true hero, in some sense, and to genius: it signifies that they, contrary to human nature, have not sought their own things, have not lived for themselves, but for all." [1]

Directly opposed to this opinion are the two beforementioned "antisophers," Nietzsche and Stirner. In brilliant language, with the passion characteristic of men

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. III, p. 150.

possessed with a fixed idea, both direct their polemics against every kind of subordination to any great idea, against every kind of striving after any high ideal. The joy in creative work has neither meaning nor value in their eyes; to them the only thing that matters is the personal satisfaction that their actions can bring them. Their aim is the gratification of their own desire, the fulfilment of caprice, regardless of the result even if it spells their ruin; they have that false notion of freedom which is in reality the opposite of all freedom, the notion of freedom characteristic of the criminal who assumes the right of murdering a human being merely for some slight personal gain or to gloat over his victim's torments. It is the freedom of bestiality. With admiration Nietzsche speaks of "the beast of prey, the magnificent *blonde brute*, avidly rampant for spoil and victory," and of "the blonde Teuton beast." [1] According to him "at the commencement, the noble caste was always the barbarian caste . . . . . they were more *complete* men, which at every point also implies the same as 'more complete beasts.'" [2] Nietzsche speaks of the unnatural restraint that men had to impose on themselves when first they formed a community, a state. They could not rend each other to pieces like brute beasts, but had to take consideration of and bear with one another. For this they found compensation outside the boundaries of their country and nation. There their essentially brutal nature came to light, then they were complete men in Nietzsche's sense of the word, then "they *revert* to the innocence of the beast-of-prey conscience, like jubilant monsters, who perhaps come from a ghastly bout of murder, arson, rape,

[1] *The Complete Works*, edited by O. Levy; vol. XIII, pp. 40, 41. *(The Genealogy of Morals.* Translated by H. B. Samuel. 1910.)

[2] Id. vol. XII, p. 224. *(Beyond Good and Evil.* Translated by H. Zimmern. 1911).

and torture, with bravado and a moral equanimity, as though merely some wild student's prank had been played." [1]

In "The Master Builder" this passage is repeated in a different form by Ibsen, and like Nietzsche and Stirner he also extols the "robust conscience," in other words, the criminally disposed man, who goes his own way regardless of others, without scruple destroying everyone who opposes his caprice and boundless selfishness.

The reason for this mental attitude is to be found in an entirely false conception of the idea of freedom. The reckless criminal looks upon himself as free, because he apparently obeys his own will solely, despising the altruistic man as a weakling, because in his opinion the latter makes himself quite uselessly dependent on things extraneous to himself. The criminal who obeys only his own caprice and the mood of the moment, looks on anyone objectively interested in a thing as unfree, because the egotist is quite incapable of understanding such an interest. And just here lies the narrowness of the criminal mind. For, obeying as he does solely his own caprice and passing mood, the selfish man lacks all understanding of things and persons. Everything is regarded quite one-sidedly and purely with reference to the possibility of its ministering at any given moment to his wish and humour. There can thus be no question of a truly rational and appropriate treatment of persons and things, for the egotist lacks the comprehension of the true connection of things, a comprehension necessary to every sensible act. To grasp this connection, a disinterested absorption in the nature of things and their obedience to universal laws is required. Consequently, the selfish man will continually come into conflict with persons and things, and instead

[1] *The Complete Works*, vol. XIII, p. 40.

of being able to develop his individuality freely, he will be deprived of his dangerous freedom, expelled from society, and rendered innocuous, as a snake is deprived of its fangs. The criminal is in fact a lower species of human being, and his whole nature is not far removed from that of the senseless brute beast which fancies an enemy in every stranger.

The more altruistic on the other hand a man is, the more fully will genius and divinity be revealed in him, the more will he recognise himself in everything around him, the more lovingly will he enter into the peculiarities of every person and thing, and the more will his conduct be adapted to this deeper recognition, the more will the result of all his actions be beneficial and successful, and the more will other men be inclined to help, support, and protect him, and to increase the range of his power. To the altruistic, disinterested man power is given sooner or later; he is the free man and his authority is gladly acknowledged. The selfish man sooner or later suffers shipwreck, his authority is borne only with resentment, and the moment occasion offers, his tyranny is broken; he is the real slave, and only so long as he is able to rely on rude force is he apparently free.

The "antisophers" or philosophists of to-day try to extol the egotist and criminal as the hero of humanity and to fling contempt on the really free man, the man of genius, on whom the mantle of God's grace has fallen, and to whom in virtue thereof and not by chance, it is given to rule. But everything perverse and false brings its own condemnation in time. It cannot continue to exist, because all life, all existence is based on union and not on isolation. Whatever isolates and detaches itself from those bonds that keep the whole together, loses touch with the whole, and can no longer have a part in its life. The

criminal isolates himself and is expelled, but the altruistic man finds a field of activity, freedom, and life in the life of the whole. The selfish man is small-minded and takes everything personally, he is confined to his own insignificant, limited personality; the disinterested man is great, because he lives in the great whole, his individuality is enlarged the more he becomes the centre of objective interests. That is the meaning of Schopenhauer's words: "He only is great who in his work, whether it is practical or theoretical, seeks *not his own concerns*, but pursues an *objective end* alone." [1]

Christ's words tell us what false and true freedom are: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. III. p. 150.

APPENDIX.

GOD AND THE WORLD.

FOR the benefit of those readers who do not shrink from metaphysics and who may wish for a fuller substantiation of the author's opinion on the relation between God and the world and the significance of genius resulting from it, the following passage from my essay of 1888 on "*Das Wesen des Genies*" (The Nature of Genius) may be appended:

"We start from the conception of an absolute existence. Let us imagine there existed in reality only one single being, God. Now, a thing may exist either for itself, that is, in its own consciousness, or for some other thing, that is, in the consciousness of that other. If it exists neither in its own consciousness, nor in that of anything else, it has no being at all. Therefore God must necessarily live in His own consciousness, for outside Him nothing exists for which He could form a mere object of consciousness, as a stone does for me, since God is the single existing being, the Absolute. Now, we cannot conceive of any consciousness that does not exhibit contrasts in itself. (A consciousness that we cannot conceive of could not be called by that name, for it would simply be none.) I should have no consciousness of light if I had not at the same time that of darkness, nor of heat, if I did not also feel cold; and, above all, I should have no consciousness of my own self, if there were no other things beside me to which I found myself thrown into contrast, so that

in my consciousness I could distinguish myself from what is not myself. God therefore requires some such contrast, if He is to have consciousness, that is, a real existence. If, for instance, He contemplates Himself in His infinite freedom and absolute unconditionality, there must simultaneously arise within Him the correlative idea of absence of freedom, of complete conditionality.

"It is God Himself, however, who has both the consciousness of His real absolute freedom and the conception of the contrary, that of entire absence of freedom. On the one hand, therefore, He is in reality the infinitely free God, on the other, even in His own conception, a conditioned and limited being; for God Himself forms the conception of limitation, and must therefore even in His own conception be limited.

"Here the relation between God and His creature becomes clear. Each single limited, finite, conditioned being is none other than God Himself in the conception which serves Him as a contrast with the consciousness of His real freedom and unconditionality. Dying is therefore nothing but the coming of God to Himself out of this one definite conception that He has formed of an imperfect being and into which He has lived Himself, as the artist lives himself into his figures. To die is the awakening of God from a dream.

"Since, however, His freedom and unconditionality are based on the fact that His is the only real existence, that nothing exists outside Himself which can condition and limit Him, then lack of freedom and conditionality must consist in the very fact of many beings existing side by side who, by each asserting his own existence, condition and limit one another. Therefore God's conception of an unfree existence includes, at the same time, the conception of many beings that condition one another.

God in His utmost self-abasement and imagined finiteness becomes an atom, a being that is limited in its existence and reduced to its smallest compass by an infinite number of similar beings. The matter out of which everything is built up is God Himself infinitely subdivided, as He is only in His own conception, forming a contrast with His real absolute unity. Multiplicity, therefore, is only a conception, a semblance, and *truth lies only in unity*, in the abandonment of the particular individual personality, and in the fusion with others to a more exalted whole, in a word, in Love.

"Now, although God may descend from His lofty station and, in His own conception, become a conditioned, finite being, yet a more or less distinct consciousness of His self-abasement must still remain with that conditioned, finite being, for God can yield Himself up, but cannot entirely lose Himself even in the conception of an atom into which He has lived Himself. This consciousness of His self-abasement must now find its corresponding expression, and, indeed, we see in all things, in the atom as well as in the solar system, in the individual human being as well as in the nations, the striving to pass from multiplicity to unity. The force of gravitation, that is, the tendency of bodies to approach each other and form units with a common centre of gravity, the chemical affinities as the result of which single atoms unite into particular groups, the formation of crystals, the development of organisms from cells, and numerous other similar processes, as well as, on the other hand, the gregarious instinct of men and animals, love, devotion to one's profession, to the State, etc., can only in this way find their true explanation. In short, all psychical and physical phenomena can, from this point of view, be uniformly explained and reduced to a final principle.

"Even the union of atoms into molecules is therefore the expression of God's knowledge of self-abasement in a finite being and of His striving after a return to unity, that is, to Himself, from a conception that is painful. The single being sees itself reduced to a minimum in its existence by an endless number of others, and so long as it sees in them only *others*, that is, does not recognise that this multiplicity is a deception, and consequently keeps aloof from them in the hostile assertion of its absolute independence, so long will this condition be a painful one, because combined with lack of freedom and a limitation of its own existence. Hindered by the presence of others, it is unable to live out its own life. It does not belong to itself, but is driven and drawn hither and thither by other beings and relations that are inherently alien to it. As soon, however, as it sees through the deception, this painful state vanishes; it perceives in others no longer alien, hostile beings, but itself. It more or less completely renounces that external, impracticable freedom and independence and attains instead an *inner, intellectual* freedom and felicity; for now it can fully and completely live out its own life; indeed it no longer lives in itself only, but simultaneously in all other things, and if it is conditioned and limited by these, still it is simply itself which in these others conditions and limits itself. But self-limitation and freedom are identical conceptions.

"As phenomena, as material things which divide and distinguish themselves from one another, we are, according to Kant, indeed unfree, wholly unfree. The more, however, the *nous* (νοῦς), the spirit fills us, and the more we become *noumena*, spiritual beings, the more shall we recognise the spiritual tie that binds all beings and makes them a single spirit, God; in the other beings near us, we then shall recognise ourselves and in spiritual love melt with

them into a single being. Therefore as *noumena*, as spiritual beings, which see in themselves and in all others solely the supermundane existence that has entered into this conception of many beings limiting one another, we are free, entirely free. This is the solution of the problem of freedom of will. In so far as I am a being that separates itself inwardly from the beings around me, that is, in my individual existence, in my egoism, I am unfree and unhappy; but in so far as I find myself again in those beings around me and see in the limitation imposed on me by them only a self-limitation, since it is myself that lives in them, that is, in so far as I love them I am also free and happy. Hence, according to the words of Christ, the command, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,' is identical with 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'

"Nothing, indeed, can enable us to approach God but the surrender of our egoism. The more distinct God's consciousness of Himself is in the mind of the finite being, the more will He be disposed to abandon the conception of Himself as a finite creature. And now we can understand how Christ could come forward and say, 'Ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven,' and what it signifies when Christ allows Himself to be nailed to the cross, and why the Christian religion is called the religion of love. If the Indian sage speaks truth in saying, 'Thou art I,' if the chasm that separates my ego from yours is only an apparent, imaginary one, then in love must necessarily lie the way, the truth, and the life; for love alone bridges this chasm, it sees its own self in the other being, is absorbed into it, and is thereby freed from its own narrow personality and the pain attaching to confinement within itself. But when whatever

is imperfect disappears that which is perfect comes to view, as a picture becomes visible when the curtain that covers it is drawn aside. Mortify the man within you, and God will emerge in all His glory. For it is God Himself who in His own conception, is this person or that person, this thing or that thing. If then in the midst of this conception, He comes, in the finite being, to a consciousness of Himself, He abandons this conception even before the real awakening, that is, before death occurs. He no longer, in the earthly being, treats appearances seriously, He inwardly frees Himself from the world of conceptions, and becomes a disinterested, noble, ethic personality that surrenders itself while serving all.

"Now we are able to answer the question as to the nature of genius. In the soul of the man of genius lives the more or less clear consciousness of his own supermundane existence, so that it defines and conditions his whole method of thought, sensation, and volition, that is, all the manifestations of life within him. It is freedom from his own individuality, superiority to his own person, that puts quite a definite impress on all the manifestations of genius; this it is which characterises the man of genius in his thoughts, sense-perceptions, and actions, and by this may be shown how consistently the whole way in which his personality expresses itself may be deduced from his inner free attitude towards this earthly existence and all its relations.

"In the first place, where thought is concerned, the man of genius will always and necessarily look for principles. He will never rest satisfied with observing a phenomenon, but will always seek for the law on which it is based, he will try to grasp the connection between different phenomena and thus to reconstruct the unity corresponding to his own nature which strives to return out of the

multiplicity of appearances to the unity of the highest being. Hence the thinker of genius seeks the final principles of things, and indeed all science is founded on the striving of the human mind after freedom. But only a disinterested mind can have the right sense for science, for only he who is accustomed to eliminate or abstract his own individuality from phenomena will be willing and able to grasp their general significance. 'The first and last thing that is demanded of genius is love of truth,' says Goethe,[1] and we also know that, from his whole mental constitution, the man of genius must insist on absolute truth, since he has no personal interest that can lessen this insistence. The man of genius does not seek success for his own sake, and hence is in no haste whatever to have done with his work and receive the reward of his exertions. Nor does he fear to lose his soul in the pursuit of his investigations, since he is not personally concerned; for if in his thoughts and actions he considered his eternal salvation or perdition, he would allow himself to be guided by personal motives, his thoughts and actions would no longer be centred in themselves, he would be tied down by alien considerations, he would be unfree, his thoughts untrue, his action immoral. It is written, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear," and this applies as well to the perfect love of truth as to the perfect love of God. Master Eckehart[2] may here also be quoted, according to whom virtuous dealing is purposeless dealing. Even the kingdom of Heaven, salvation, and eternal life are not justifiable purposes of moral will. Purposeless is meant here in respect to one's own person.

[1] *Criticisms, Reflexions, and Maxims*, p. 224.

[2] Meister Eckehart, *Schriften und Predigten*. Aus dem Mittelhochdeutschen übersetzt und herausgegeben von H. Büttner. Bd. I. 1903. Bd. II. 1909.

"Just as the thoughts of the man of genius are philosophical, directed towards principles and the comprehension of the particular in its general significance, so his sense-perceptions will be altogether artistic. He will not view things in their relation to his own person, with regard to their advantage or disadvantage for him, but *sub specie æternitatis*, in the light of eternity, that is, æsthetically, with eyes only for the beauty of their appearance, their shape, colour, stature, and movement. Just as the disinterested man eliminates his own person in his thoughts and reflections, so will he in his sense-perceptions set aside his own individuality and give the object full scope to produce its effect. In his sense-perceptions he effaces himself, he feels not himself, but only the impression created by the object. The latter thereby acquires, as it were, an independent life, it is an end unto itself, it exists for itself, in a word, it becomes an æsthetic object.

"Now one can understand what passed in the mind of Jacob Böhme, when the secret of the universe was revealed to him while he was contemplating a tin dish on which the sun was shining. He suddenly became conscious of his æsthetic sensation, of its meaning and its connection with the whole constitution of his inspired mind. The most trifling, insignificant thing can become an æsthetic object to such disinterested contemplation, as Schiller has also explained in one of his æsthetical writings. He calls beauty the freedom that has entered into an appearance, and from the preceding explanation the reader will be able to appreciate the full meaning of these words. An object acquires beauty as soon as, in sense-perception, it becomes a free one, that exists only for its own sake. But only the man who is freed from himself can view things thus; in his perceptions objects become free because they are no longer contemplated with reference

to his own person. Thus freedom enters into appearances, it becomes visible in things, and *this visibility of freedom is simply beauty*. So we understand how Christ found the lily of the field more beautifully arrayed than Solomon in all his glory, we recognise in this His æsthetic manner of observing things and are filled with admiration at the consistency and unity of such a mind.

"We see how logically all the manifestations of genius may be deduced from the free attitude of genius towards this whole world of phenomena, and understand why Christ, in whom genius has found its purest expression, repeatedly directs our attention to the one thing needful, namely the freeing of the soul from the delusion that it really is what it seems to itself and to others.[1] As long as man does not recognise the God in himself, as long as he is fettered by his narrow, petty personality, so long will his thoughts be confused, his sense-perception shallow and animal-like, his will impure and sinful. But mortify the man within you, and you will see with rapture a new world arise, for then you will no longer behold it with the eyes of a miserable mortal, but with those of the free and immortal God: it is your own world you will then see, and you can say with Leopardi, "'Tis sweet to me to perish in this ocean.' Hence the words of Christ, 'My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' Casting away 'what is mortal and unsure,' to use the words of Hamlet, we gain an eternal portion; for at the moment in which I feel as if God lived in me, to make use of an expression similar to one in the '*Theologia deutsch*,'[2] at that moment

[1] According to Kant we have, in the intuitive form of space, the outer world of phenomena as datum; in the intuitive form of time, on the other hand, we contemplate our inner condition, we are phenomena to ourselves.

[2] Or "German Theology", a tract written at the end of the 14th century by an unknown author, and published for the first time by Luther in 1518.

I am one with God: but since all His moments must be simultaneously present in God's own mind, I have, at this one moment in which I was one with God, found my eternal existence in God as God.

"We saw above how in disinterested contemplation the simplest thing may become an æsthetic object. During this contemplation the thing is detached from its surroundings as well as from the personality of the observer; it becomes a thing existing for itself, superior to time and space; it is an end unto itself, it contains its own centre of gravity, and shows to the eye thus contemplating it an absolute and free entity. Absolute existence, God, when perceived and contemplated, is clothed in what we call beauty. Only the God in us sees God, and this perception of ourselves in the object which we contemplate finds expression in the sensation of the beautiful.

"Only by abstraction from my own personal entity can the object of my contemplation gain inner value, that is, life. But as it is myself as *noumenon*, as spiritual being, that exists in the particular object as well as in every other thing, I have, by abstracting from myself and thus giving life to this object, arrived at the recognition of my own ego in another thing; I have found myself in that other thing, and the feeling of joy at the self-recognition in the object contemplated, is what we call æsthetic sensation, or delight in the beautiful. Goethe in 'After Falconet and about Falconet' says, 'By keeping the attention fixed on a special figure in the *same* kind of light, he who has an eye must in the end necessarily penetrate into all the secrets by which the thing is presented to him as it is. Now imagine the attention fixed on *one* form in *all* sorts of light, then *this thing will become to you more and more vivid, more true, more perfect, it will finally become yourself.*'

"The thing in question may be quite shapeless, and to other eyes may even appear distinctly ugly. In this case everything is due to sensation alone, which by its power of abstraction from one's own personal entity has imparted to the thing an independent existence. But when this power of abstraction is not sufficiently strong, the object itself must, through its own shape, come to the assistance of sensation and enable it, even without an extreme effort of abstraction, to grasp the thing as something existing in itself. In the shape of an object we see the line of demarcation between it and the outer world. If this shape is such as to present the object as a unity, as withdrawing so to say into itself and from the outer world, it will be infinitely easier for the observer to see it as an entity in itself, as self-centred and self-dependent like God, as free in its manifestation of itself, as beautiful.

"And now we come to the third form of the expression of life, namely, to will and endeavour. Here the freedom of the man of genius from his own personality will be evidenced by the fact that his actions are not determined by personal motives. The man of genius does not stand above himself only, but also above all personal relations; hence he has in truth neither kindred nor native country, nor does he belong exclusively to any one party or to any one nation. History teaches us that outward circumstances absolutely favour this position. The Israelite Moses was educated as an Egyptian; a Greek empire was founded, not from Athens or Lacedaemon, but from Macedonia; Napoleon was not a Frenchman but a Corsican; and other similar examples may be found. 'Who is my mother? And who are my brethren?' said our Saviour.

"The man of genius, as has before been stated, acts either freely, that is without personal motives, even though his eternal salvation be at stake, or he never

arrives at the action intended; for genius may perish, but it cannot belie itself. Wherever personal considerations force themselves upon the man of genius and seek to lead him into a subjective course of action, he is unable to follow. This is the problem of Hamlet's conduct: stirred up by his father to personal revenge, he failed to act, because his inspired, free nature could only be guided by purely objective ideas and shrank from the influence of subjective considerations.

"Very similar was the psychical process that took place in Luther's mind when he found himself at a deadlock, because, in keeping with the doctrine of the Roman Catholic church, he assumed that his salvation depended on his actions and therefore on *outward, accidental* factors, since all action consists merely in changes in the relations that govern this world here below. From this point of view his action was not free, it had his salvation as object, that is, a personal motive lay at the root of it, and hence his noble soul striving to maintain its inner, genuine freedom, could find no rest, nor could he find any satisfactory sphere of activity until he had fought his way to the conviction: — I do not need to work out my own salvation, my eternal worth does not depend on to-day or on to-morrow, on this or on that outward factor, my action is entirely free as far as my own soul is concerned, for the very reason that everything I do is determined by outward factors, by time and place and circumstance, and is therefore unfree as regards the world. What is eternal cannot be dependent on what is finite, the unconditioned on the conditioned, nor, consequently, can my eternal salvation depend on any finite, conditioned action of mine. — And by this conviction he was restored to himself, his energy could develop to its utmost, and

his activity, thus set at full liberty, was able to accomplish its gigantic work.

"The secret of the all-conquering power of genius lies precisely in the fact that it inwardly assumes a free attitude towards its own conduct and consequently, unhampered by personal considerations, acts with extraordinary energy and boldness. The eye of the man of genius is always fixed on the universal and great; for untrammelled by petty, egoistic interests, he sees clearly what is needful to the community, and recognising at the same time by what selfish motives the vast majority of mankind are actuated, he feels himself singled out to accomplish what is needed by his age. Devoid of all anxiety or regard for himself, he boldly pursues the course he has recognised as the right one, regardless where it may finally lead and without halting to enjoy the fruits of his labour. Genius does not linger on its way, it does not fight in order to possess, it fights for the sake of fighting only, to give full play to its powers; for life consists only in activity, the highest life in the freest activity, in the boldest thought, in the intensest sensation, in striving towards the grandest goal. The activity of genius is in the highest sense of the word play, it is a free activity, aimless for the man himself like any other game. For should he make an earnest thing of what he undertakes, that is, pursue particular objects for his own sake, so that his mind became really fettered, his activity would be determined by personal motives, it would be unfree, and the nature of genius would thus become untrue to itself. One can, indeed, serve only one of two masters, God or mammon, and as light cannot appear unless darkness vanishes, so also, as has been shown, the man in us cannot be denied without God in us rising in his stead. Hence a man

cannot sever his relations to this world, cannot be freed from his own self, cannot abjure mammon, without God in him gaining life even though in his own mind he may not recognise the fact. We have to take this whole existence for what it is, a passing conception of an unfree state, serving only as a correlate, a contrast with the actual and eternal existence of God. As soon as we attribute an absolute value to this present life we allow the conception of multiplicity — a conception which only finds justification as a contrast with the reality of the unity of divine nature — to acquire a significance to which it can lay no claim.

"'*Les extrèmes se touchent*,' the saying of a man of genius, is at the same time characteristic of the nature of genius in general. The most perfect self-abnegation and disinterestedness is here coincident with the greatest self-dependence and originality, for precisely he who is so disinterested that personal relations lose all value for him, is at the same time self-dependent in the highest sense, since no personal interest can fetter him. Hence we can understand how such a man can master a world; for himself unmoved and uninfluenced, he is enabled to move and influence everything.[1] The man of genius does not even seek like other, insignificant beings, to play the part of Providence. Calm to his very heart's core, he is content to go his way, weighing only the

[1] The same thought is expressed by Matthew Arnold in his poem "Self-Dependence" (*Selected Poems*. 1886, pp. 170-1):

> Weary of myself, and sick of asking
> What I am, and what I ought to be,
> At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
> Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.
>
> And a look of passionate desire
> O'er the sea and to the stars I send:
> "Ye who from my childhood up have calm'd me,
> Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

main chances in his calculations, and leaving all else to fate. Full of trust in his star, he succeeds where the man who is anxious about his success, and afraid of overlooking any chance that may possibly turn the scale, misses the most essential of all, because he is too much occupied with secondary matters. The philistine attempts to play the part of Providence, to gather all the threads of events into his own hands, and therefore fails ignominiously. In our actions we are always outwardly unfree, since they are invariably influenced by outward factors. The man of genius, therefore, whose nature aims only at freedom, cannot treat his affairs with real, deep gravity; for how could he who values only what is self-centred and self-dependent attach any positive value to what is so altogether conditioned and dependent as our actions,

"Ah, once more," I cried, "ye stars, ye waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew;
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you!"

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night-air came the answer:
"Wouldst thou *be* as these are? *Live* as they.

"Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

"And with joy the stars perform their shining,
And the sea its long moon-silver'd roll;
For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
All the fever of some differing soul.

"Bounded by themselves, and unregardful
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see."

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear:
"Resolve to be thyself; and know, that he
Who finds himself, loses his misery!"

our success and failure? *Only in desiring, in striving are we free, not in attaining.*

'Plunge we in Time's tumultuous dance,
In the rush and roll of Circumstance!
Then may delight and distress,
And worry and success,
Alternately follow, as best they can:
Restless activity proves the man!' [1]

"To sum up: we have traced the nature of the man of genius and the whole manner in which his personality produces its effect to his complete disinterestedness and freedom of soul. We have seen how this freedom finds expression according to the various mental processes, firstly, in thought as the effort to grasp phenomena in their connection with one another and to bring them under general laws, secondly, in sensation as an æsthetic perception which regards the object as something free, existing for itself, lastly, in volition as a complete surrender to higher aims, the soul of the man of genius nevertheless remaining continually free from the object of his activity, free from care about the result, be it success or failure."

[1] Goethe, *Faust*. Translated by Bayard Taylor. Part I, sc. 4.

IV.

SHAKESPEARE'S CONCEPTION OF THE NATURE OF GENIUS IN HAMLET.

GENIUS, objectivity, disinterestedness can be displayed in three directions, corresponding to the threefold attitude of man towards the outer world surrounding him. For firstly, man receives the impressions of the outer world; he perceives. Secondly, he mentally converts these impressions into ideas which he fits into the picture he has conceived of the world; he thinks. And thirdly, as a result of the impressions received and of the ideas he has obtained from them, he forms his resolutions and carries them out; he acts. Genius, objectivity, or disinterestedness in perception leads to the conception of the beautiful. Genius in thought leads to truth, and genius in action leads to the accomplishment of what is good, great, and of solid worth.

To those geniuses among humanity, in whom this perfection of æsthetic, intellectual, and moral feeling was developed in the highest degree, William Shakespeare, the greatest dramatic poet of all times, undoubtedly belongs. But the character into which he has infused his deepest and most personal sensations, thoughts, and aspirations, is his Hamlet. Shakespeare's genius has raised an everlasting monument to itself in "Hamlet." In the character

of the Danish prince, which is delineated with such marvellous and delicate skill, let us now attempt to bring to light those features in which a conformity is shown with the nature of genius, that is, those features in which objectivity or disinterestedness of sensation, thought, and will are clearly exhibited.

According to the order of our researches, let us first consider the nature of Hamlet's sense-impressions. How does the outward appearance of persons and things affect his perceptive faculties? With what eyes does he regard the world? The answer must evidently be — with the eyes of love, as in keeping with his nature. With what admiration, for instance, does he speak of his father's noble and heroic appearance; in what magnificent words does he clothe his enthusiasm and delight when referring to the grand figure of the old king! It is impossible for him to conceive that the difference in the mere outward aspect of the two brothers, of the old king, his mother's former husband, and of King Claudius, her present consort, did not suffice to keep her from exchanging a precious jewel for a pebble, a god for a monkey. In his mother's apartment, in the fourth scene of the third act, he in fiery words attempts to impress the characteristic difference in the outward appearance of the two brothers upon her. Pointing to the portraits of the two kings he addresses these words to her:

> "Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
> The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
> See what a grace was seated on this brow;
> Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself,
> An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
> A station like the herald Mercury
> New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;

A combination and a form indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal
To give the world assurance of a man:
This was your husband. Look you now, what
follows:
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! Have you eyes?
... What devil was't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope."

We see from the vivid style of the description with what intensity Hamlet becomes absorbed in the outward aspect of a man, how affectionately he regards all the perfections, and with what abhorrence all the defects in the outer form, in direct contrast to our naturalistic artists, who intentionally avoid all that is perfect and seek out all that is ugly in the figures they represent. But to be able to value, in Hamlet's intense way, what is perfect in the mere outer form, one must like him possess an unprejudiced, objective, disinterested eye for things. Now, generally speaking, women are of a less objective disposition than men. Their sphere of interest is a more limited one and therefore the purely beautiful has not for them the significance that it has for men. A subjective, one-sided interest makes it easier for women to entertain liking even for what is ugly and deformed. Thus Goethe could say in "Faust:"

"A stubby nose, face broad and flat,
The women don't object to that;
For when his paw holds forth the Faun,
The fairest to the dance is drawn."

And so with deliberate intention Shakespeare could paint in Queen Gertrude a woman who, after belonging to an Apollo, was capable of giving herself to a Faun. Hamlet, the man of objective eye who is disgusted by the mere external impression that Claudius makes — "Even a sickly part of one true sense could not so mope —" Hamlet is completely bewildered by his mother's conduct. "That it should come to this!" he exclaims, "but two months dead! nay, not so much, not two: so excellent a king, that was, to this, Hyperion to a satyr!"

With his intense appreciation of a perfect outward form, however, Hamlet combines an equally great enthusiasm for noble inward qualities, for a brave heart and lofty mind. Revolted by the mere outer shape of Claudius, he is still more so by his evil, base conduct. Yet not everyone shows openly what passes within his heart, and as everyone strives to place himself in his best light, so does everyone desire to be considered an amiable, capable, and virtuous man. Thus even a fratricide like King Claudius habitually displays a smiling, amiable countenance, lavishes promises on every side, and seeks to attach everyone to himself by flattery and complaisance. Appearances are deceptive. Naturally, the amiability, flattery and complaisance of Claudius can make an impression only on those who are rendered accessible to such pleasing civilities by their subjective bias, as are the great majority of men, and especially women. But Hamlet is not deceived by such appearances as Claudius seeks to produce, since our hero is not so subjectively biassed as to permit the

arts of the crowned self-seeker to influence him. From the very outset Hamlet continually returns short and ironical answers to the king.

But besides the conscious, artificial deception that a man like Claudius seeks to produce by outward amiability, there is also an unconscious, natural deception found in the wonderful charm that surrounds a girlish character like that of Ophelia. Here it is much more difficult than in the case of the smiling amiability of a scoundrel, to avoid deducing a similarity between outer appearance and inner qualities, to avoid imagining within the lovely figure a noble, high-minded disposition. A man endowed with genius, like Hamlet, who enthusiastically praises all that is perfect, will also be deeply affected by the charm of an Ophelia, and, full of that love which seeks perfection everywhere, he will attribute to this perfectly beautiful body an equally perfect and beautiful soul. He will see in her the embodiment of his ideal, a goddess. Hence Hamlet's enthusiastic letter to Ophelia beginning, "To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia."

But with all her outward perfection, with all the beauty of her form, the celestial Ophelia is only an incomplete fragment mentally; she also is only a weak, frail woman, subjectively biassed, and, like Hamlet's mother, accessible to all personal influences. "Frailty, thy name is woman!" exclaims Hamlet in his first monologue. Ophelia is a good daughter, who implicitly follows her father's directions, and who readily and willingly accepts her brother's precepts as to her moral behaviour towards Hamlet; she is so good a daughter that she loses her mind at her father's sudden, strange, and violent death; but in her there can be no question of a truly noble heart or of a really great, high-thinking, free nature, otherwise she

could not so easily have given credence to the suspicions raised against Hamlet by her father and brother.

Polonius, toady and sneak as he is, who judges everyone by his own base standard, could only meet with the profoundest contempt on the part of Hamlet. The prince plays his pranks upon him and ridicules him without mercy. What a sorrow it must be to our hero that the girl in whom he sees his ideal, the idol of his soul, his goddess, should allow herself to be persuaded by such a father that he, Hamlet, approached her only out of base and sensual motives. For Polonius it is quite inconceivable that a prince should be so foolish as to fall seriously in love with a girl below him in rank, and really desire to make her his wife. Polonius has also done some silly things in his time, as he relates with a smirk, but to marry below his station, no, for this he was too clever, and because he does not believe the prince capable of such folly, he thinks Hamlet's intentions towards his daughter can only be sordid ones, and warns Ophelia, ordering her to keep aloof from the prince.

Hamlet is deeply wounded by this want of confidence, and painfully moved by the discovery that his goddess possesses only the outward perfection of form, and not the inner perfection of soul, that, in fact, she is not a goddess, but only a weak, subjectively biassed woman, not unprejudiced enough to perceive the genuine and noble qualities of Hamlet's nature in spite of all insinuations. We all judge others by ourselves, and with what measure we mete, as Christ says, it shall be measured to us again. As the popular phrase runs, we measure other people's corn by our own bushel. In misjudging a man like Hamlet, Ophelia characterises herself as a good but small-minded creature. There can be no question of divine beauty of soul with this simple, somewhat prosaic, practical-minded girl.

Nevertheless, what a powerful impression the outward, divine beauty of her form, the tender loveliness of her appearance, her blooming, fragrant youth, produce on Hamlet's æsthetic mind! How his eyes are held captive by this perfect shape, and how bitter to his feelings to know that this perfection lies only on the surface and does not extend within, is found in the body, and not in the soul! And how strange this singular deception on the part of Nature must appear to him on reflection, since the interior is so readily deduced from the exterior, and thus an outer is so easily converted into an inner perfection. This explains the remarkable scene of which Ophelia, breathless and terrified, tells her father:

> "He took me by the wrist and held me hard;
> Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
> And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
> He falls to such perusal of my face
> As he would draw it. Long time stay'd he so;
> At last, — a little shaking of mine arm,
> And thrice his head thus waving up and down, —
> He raised a sigh so piteous and profound,
> That it did seem to shatter all his bulk,
> And end his being: that done, he lets me go;
> And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
> He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
> For out o' doors he went without their help,
> And, to the last, bended their light on me."

Indeed, Ophelia remains beautiful, ravishingly beautiful, even when Hamlet recognises that she does not possess the soul of a goddess. But only her body is beautiful and admirable, only her form; hence, holding her at arm's length, and with the other hand shading his eyes, he looks fixedly at her as at a work of art, as at a picture, "as he

would draw" her, as Ophelia expresses it. And just as we do not converse with a lifeless image, with a work of art, of which we enjoy only the sight, so also Hamlet has nothing to say to Ophelia. Silently he looks at her and silently he finds his way to the door, his eyes to the end fastened on the lovely apparition. The "waving up and down" of his head is the sign that he has now recognised the disparity between the outside and the inside, between the perfect form, the marvellously beautiful body, and the imperfect mind, the petty, prosaic soul to which his soul cannot speak, because, with his inexpressible longing for the ideal, he would meet with no understanding.

What Hamlet says to Ophelia afterwards, is only bitter irony. She is after all but the same as other women. "I have heard of your paintings too, well enough," he says; "God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad."

His thorough disenchantment on recognising that the ideal and the real do not coincide, that in this world what is evil and mean preponderates and succeeds, has embittered all his delight in the things of this world. But how accessible his mind is to æsthetic impressions, how full of genius his way of looking at things is, is shown by the noble words in which he gives expression to his admiration of the outer beauty of the world and man. "I have of late," he says to Rosencranz and Guildenstern, "— but wherefore I know not — lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the Earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firma-

ment, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, — why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours . . . What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?"

We hear in his words the deep embitterment, the profound, intense grief that makes everything precious of no significance to him, and yet we hear also his great love and enthusiasm for the marvellous aspect of the beauty of world and man, and his complete devotion to it. "This most excellent canopy," he says of the sky, "this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire. And man, the master-piece of creation, in form and moving how express and admirable, the beauty of the world."

The delight in natural beauty implies of course also a delight in artistic beauty, and hence, for instance, also in dramatic art. How fine a taste Hamlet displays in his conception of it, we see from the directions he gives the actor for reciting his verses. We hear him express his desire that the actor should treat everything with propriety, that even in the torrent and whirlwind of passion he should acquire and maintain a certain temperance which lends a real grace to passion; the same demand that is made on the artist by Schiller in his Essay on the Pathetic, namely that whenever passion is to be expressed, the moral freedom of man should be preserved, that is, the power of resistance, originating in his intelligence, to the passion which would make him a slave. A man so completely ruled by passion, grief, or lust that it tosses him helplessly to and fro, is neither a beautiful

nor a sublime, but simply a painful spectacle, and a subject rather for the pathologist than for the artist.

How high and true an appreciation of art Hamlet possesses we see further from his remarks on the speech that he desires to hear immediately on the arrival of the actors; he says to one of them, "I heard thee speak me a speech once, — but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once, for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviar to the general: but it was — as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine — an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation; but call'd it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine."

Here we find him extolling *modest simplicity* and *natural beauty* as the infallible characteristics of a genuine work of art.

Let us now pass on to consider what Hamlet's mode of thinking has in common with genius. In the first place, it is in the highest degree significant that Wittenberg was the university at which he had studied. This was in Shakespeare's time the chief seat of exact science. It is therefore very significant that his hero, a man of the age of thirty, should have come from this university and should also desire to return to it, a proof that Hamlet has attended the university not for mere form's sake, but because he has a real liking for exact science; in entire contrast with Laertes who, on his part, goes to Paris, the great city of pleasure-seekers, in order to acquire the polish of a man of the world.

We will now examine how in definite individual cases

the objective mode of thought, as inspired by genius, reveals itself in Hamlet. Such a manner of thinking aims at finding, in the extraordinary manifoldness of incidents and events, the uniform law to which everything that happens is subject. All science consists in the establishment of the uniform rules and laws on which all growth and decay are based. In the first two essays, the attempt has already been made to show that by his mode of thought the man of genius penetrates into the innermost character of things, and grasps the idea, the essence, the real nature inherent in them. Now, the idea of a thing is nothing but the law of its development, the definite regularity and conformity to law in its construction and in the co-operation of its parts. The endeavour to recognise the ideas, the essence of things, is therefore identical with the endeavour to grasp the relations that exist between things and between their parts. The objective mode of thought of the man of genius aims at discovering the principles and laws which govern all that happens.

The single appearance, the single occurrence, the single manifestation of life in a being, the single effect of a thing, is considered not only in its relation to its immediate surroundings, but in its relation to the whole mass of kindred phenomena and effects, and these universally applicable relations find expression in a law, in a universal truth. For instance, the fact that a man may be a fratricide and still can smile and look pleasant and amiable, is a single experience which Hamlet meets with in his uncle Claudius. But for our hero this experience does not remain unique and separate; he compares it with kindred occurrences, for instance, with the apparently boundless devotion, the apparently insatiable tenderness which attached his mother to her first husband, whom yet she could so quickly forget and replace

by a miserable flatterer. "Why, she would hang on him," Hamlet exclaims, "as if increase of appetite had grown by what it fed on!" He compares the outward amiability of the fratricide with the blandishments of women, to whom God has given one face, and who yet make themselves another, who jig, and amble, and lisp, and pass off their coquetry as childlike ingenuousness.

The individual experience, therefore, that Hamlet makes in his uncle Claudius, that a man may be a fratricide and yet appear outwardly amiable, he compares with similar occurrences, and thus deduces the general rule, the truth, that outward and inner qualities do not correspond at all in this world, that a fair and smiling semblance hides a wicked and corrupt mind, that a base and vulgar disposition is covered by an amiable demeanour, an evil heart by kind words, and a woman's earthly and feeble soul by a divinely beautiful form and by an affectionate behaviour. But in view of this general truth, the particular case by which this principle of the discrepancy between outward and inward qualities, between semblance and reality, is so conclusively proved, namely, the amiable smile of the fratricide, appears to him so significant that, with bitter irony, he notes it in his tablets, just as he writes down other striking events that claim some general and fundamental significance.

An ordinary, subjectively biassed man would not be capable of forming such general views on the amiable smile of his father's murderer, would not be capable of recognising the truth that the murderer, in showing himself outwardly in the best possible light, only does what nearly all men do more or less by endeavouring to appear different from what they really are. "Yes, by Heaven!" Hamlet exclaims, after his discovery of the crime, "O most pernicious woman! O villain, villain, smiling, damnèd

villain! My tables; meet it is I set it down, that one may smile, and smile, and be a villain!"

The remark that he adds, "At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark," is of special interest. Unfortunately it is not so only in Denmark, it is rather a truth of universal application. All over the world men desire to appear different from what they are. In every man there is a larger or smaller fund of selfishness, vanity, presumption, pride, spite, and thirst for revenge, and yet everyone is on his guard against laying bare his own heart, and revealing what passes within. Everyone endeavours to inspire others with as good an opinion of himself as possible, and everyone thinks only the best of himself.

A man of genius like Hamlet grasps the truth, even when it touches him personally and humiliates him. A selfish man sees the failings of others, he even magnifies them and rejoices in the weakness and imperfections of his neighbour, but he does not perceive the beam in his own eye. The man of genius thinks logically. He establishes no exceptions for his own person, he detects imperfections and weaknesses, human failings and defects in himself as well as in others. Accordingly Hamlet says to Ophelia, "Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery."

The self-seeking, narrow-minded Laertes, whose father, like Hamlet's, has been killed, is a stranger to such a logi-

cal sequence of thought. Starting from the fact of his father's murder, he is not led, like Hamlet, to lament the general sinfulness and imperfection of the human race, and, since he is himself a man, to look into his own heart and with sorrow to recognise his own imperfection. No! Laertes views the act, the murder of his father, only in its immediate relations to himself as the son of the murdered man. In the slayer he does not see a typically sinful mortal, but merely an individual who has done him a terrible injury. Of course there can be no question of calm consideration, of any impartial judgment of the perpetrator's guilt. Laertes' mind is not sufficiently objective to enable him to reflect that Hamlet, a man of a thoroughly noble nature, had, in pure self-defence, and without knowing who it was, killed the person who had concealed himself behind the arras hangings with the malicious intention of playing the eavesdropper.

We now proceed to a consideration of the third way in which genius reveals itself in Hamlet's nature, namely, to a consideration of his objective, disinterested conduct. Up to recent times it has been a constant puzzle why Hamlet, after discovering the crime committed on his father, does not call the crowned murderer to account, or rather, why he does not immediately take revenge upon him, plunge the dagger into his heart, and have himself proclaimed king. I believe it is Hamlet's objectivity and extraordinary disinterestedness, his deep-seated conviction of the imperfection and sinfulness of all men, that leaves him free from the selfish impulse to seek personal satisfaction in the immediate execution of his revenge.

As soon as the man who is fettered by personal motives finds his individual feelings wounded, he knows no question of a decision for or against revenge. It is a matter of course for him to strive for personal satis-

faction, and unless restrained by fear or other practical, selfish motives, he will, in obedience to a powerful inner impulse, fall without delay on the man who has offended him, and, if possible, destroy him and crush him under foot. Just as a dog bites at the stick with which he is beaten, and as the hungry lion sees in the gazelle only the means of appeasing his hunger, so Laertes sees in Hamlet merely the murderer of his father, the author of the most terrible personal injury ever done him; and in accordance with this one-sided, subjective, narrow view, he feels no other desire than to slay, to annihilate the man who has done him so great a wrong, even though it be in a hallowed spot. He is ready "to cut his throat i' the church." His will, therefore, is as little capable of an objective decision as that of the wolf which, driven by hunger, rushes upon a lamb.

In the wild, reckless execution of revenge there is no intelligence, because it is characterised by the absence of free judgment, of sensible reflection, and of all impartial weighing of the attendant circumstances. The self-seeking man, when wounded in his personal feelings, knows no bounds, no moderation in his revenge. A thousandfold will he repay the man who has injured him. For this reason no one in a well-regulated state of society is permitted to take the law into his own hands and procure personal satisfaction himself for any wrong done him, because no one thinks with enough objectivity and disinterestedness to be a competent judge in his own cause. An injured man will always overshoot his aim, unless he be a man of genius, one who thinks objectively, like Hamlet, who does not regard things one-sidedly, with reference to his own advantage or disadvantage, but who considers them from all sides with respect to their due significance in connection with all other worldly events.

But when one-sided, personal impulses towards revenge are absent, there is no reason why revenge should be immediately taken. The man moved by such egotistical impulses rushes without deliberation upon what he wishes to obtain or to destroy. At most he will consider ways and means to his end, but as to this end itself, he is not a moment in doubt. The disinterested man, on the other hand, whose aims are mainly objective, does not blindly yield to all selfish impulses, though to these also he is naturally not a stranger; his selfish impulses are more or less counterbalanced by his impartial, objective interest in persons and things, and consequently he is led to calm consideration of them and to a more or less sensible decision.

A man like Laertes, who is actuated by a blind and mad desire for revenge, acts in opposition to honour and conscience and thus rushes to his own ruin. A man like Hamlet may also, for a time, be violently excited, but he quickly regains his moral balance, and then views things objectively and justly, and, above all, remains entirely free in forming his resolutions. When he perishes, it is not by his own fault, but by the knavery of others. Moreover, if he had actually desired to save himself, he could have done so; but the burden of life was heavy on him, he allowed things to take their course, and was too proud to keep carefully out of danger. "We defy augury," he says shortly before the catastrophe, "there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man knows aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes?"

The baseness of men excited his loathing, what was evil and imperfect in his own heart filled him with grief; so

he died willingly. When Horatio wishes to follow him in death, he begs him to live on and bear witness to him. "If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart," he says to him, "absent thee from felicity awhile, and in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain, to tell my story."

A man like Hamlet, on whom, in consequence of his great objectivity, no person or thing can permanently exert any determinative influence, must simply be measured by another standard than that of other people, than that, for instance, of Laertes who, urged by his desire for revenge, knows no limits in his hatred, no honour and no conscience in his actions.

Most finely has Shakespeare worked out the contrast between Hamlet, the man of objective mind, and the subjectively biassed Laertes; Hamlet, the man of genius, with his grand nature, in all situations preserving his inner freedom and repose, and Laertes, the average man with commonplace views, who is raised above the crowd solely by outward circumstances and who is absolutely ruled by persons and events.

We hear how Hamlet, though in the greatest excitement, immediately after the apparition of the ghost by whom he is informed of his father's murder, invokes heaven and earth, but not hell. "And shall I couple hell? O, fie!" he exclaims, when involuntarily the thought of it occurs to him. Even when most profoundly affected, Hamlet preserves so much mental freedom and self-dependence that he does *not* confound heaven and hell, supreme goodness and utmost depravity.

Very different is the case of Laertes, with his moral limitations. On his return from Paris, where he was to acquire the manners of a man of the world, he is to such an extent beside himself and in so great a fury at his father's death and obscure burial, that he breaks into

the palace at the head of a band of rebels and, rushing into the very presence of the king, sword in hand, demands satisfaction. How completely his passion dominated him on that occasion and deprived him of all calm reflection, appears especially in the fact that, in direct contrast with Hamlet's morally exalted nature, Laertes confounds heaven and hell, and no longer recognises either justice, conscience, loyalty, or humanity. Thinking at first that the king is his father's murderer, he calls out furiously to him:

> "How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:
> To Hell, allegiance! vows to the blackest devil!
> Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
> I dare damnation: to this point I stand,
> That both the worlds I give to negligence,
> Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged
> Most throughly for my father."

And this egoist breathing revenge, who will not be deterred from his vengeance by the whole world, how easily he soon afterwards lets himself be led on by that other great egoist King Claudius and suffers himself to be used as a tool by him. Whereas Hamlet, in keeping with the independence of his character, considers it a punishment inflicted on him by fate, that it should have used him as an instrument to chastise that old sneak Polonius, Laertes afterwards in the words he addresses to King Claudius actually begs to be used as another man's instrument: "My lord, I will be ruled; the rather, if you could devise it so, that I might be the organ."

When a man of objective disposition, like Hamlet, acts, he is not guided by selfish motives, such as by desire for personal satisfaction and similar feelings, but solely by objective motives, by independent ideas, by reasonable

aims and purposes. If, as the result of a great sorrow, of a complete disenchantment, he has lost for a time all delight in the free, creative activity of the man of genius, he will not act at all; he remains, in fact, passive, unless roused to self-defence by some momentary compulsion. Such is the case with Hamlet. In two earlier writings of mine, "*Hamlet ein Genie*," 1888, and "*Das psychologische Problem in der Hamlet-Tragödie*," 1890, I have already presented at greater length this solution of the Hamlet problem. The following passage occurs in the latter:

"The Hamlet tragedy is *the tragedy of idealism*, and hence its great importance. The hero is a man of ideal aims, a man endowed with genius, who passes through the same stages of development which every other idealist and true genius has to pass through, only it is his misfortune that certain things are sprung upon him at the very time when, in consequence of a crisis in his mental growth, his energy has been completely arrested, and, so to speak, forced back upon itself except for a few isolated outbursts resulting from an immediate outer impulse, — things he could under other circumstances have successfully coped with, but which now become fatal to him by surprising him during this crisis that monopolises all his thoughts and endeavours.

"Now, in what does this crisis consist? Hamlet, like a true idealist, and as usually happens with such people, had begun by forming a totally false conception of the world and its character; for, himself disposed by nature to champion what he recognised as good and noble even at the sacrifice of all personal interests, he had lived, until his father's death, in the belief that people, in general, thought and felt as he did, and that, like himself, they loved what is noble for its own sake. For instance, he imagined that the courtiers served his father so readily, not be-

cause his father was king and their service gratified their own vanity and brought them profit, but because he was a noble and gallant gentleman who aimed at promoting the best interests of the country and would even hazard his life in doing so. Similarly Hamlet thought that his mother clung to her first husband with such extraordinary tenderness out of her full appreciation for his noble character.

"Hamlet would never have thought it possible that a worse man than his father could be the object of equal respect from men, and of equal tenderness from a wife. For every man is inclined to judge of others first of all by himself, and the prince, the son of a highhearted hero and king, must have been specially liable to this self-deception by virtue of the disinterested love he had in his heart for what is good and noble. Ever since he was old enough to think rationally, he had seen the two qualities of *goodness* and *power* combined in the person of his noble father; how easily, nay, in his affectionate heart, how necessarily would these two notions become inseparable, so that his entire ideal view of life came to be based on the assumption that in reality disinterested love of what is good dwells in all human hearts, and that goodness in the world also possesses power, simply because it is good and therefore deserves power. How joyfully he was ready to toil and labour at his part of the work in conjunction with those who like himself, as he imagined, took a disinterested delight in all that was noble and beautiful, and who like himself were willing to give up everything in order to promote real good!

"Evidence of this characteristic side of Hamlet's nature, the ungrudging, joyful recognition of another's merits and disinterested love of what is noble, is found in pas-

sages like the following, where he says to good, honest Horatio:

'Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself: for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Has ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.'

"With what respect and admiration Hamlet speaks of his father!

'So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr.'

And shortly after:

'He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.'

With what esteem and sympathy he is filled for the bold, grand character of young Fortinbras, this

'delicate and tender prince;
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,
Makes mouths at the invisible event;
Exposing what is mortal and unsure
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour's at the stake.'

"If we recognise from this that Hamlet is a man of idealistic tendency and disinterested mind who loves what is noble, excellent, and capable for its own sake, and goodness because it is good, that he is a man who is ready to stand up for his ideals even at the sacrifice of all personal advantages, then we shall understand how he must have been affected by certain experiences that he passed through after his father's death. For now we come to the crisis in Hamlet's spiritual life. In Wittenberg he receives the news of his father's decease; he hastens home, and—what a strange spectacle is here presented to his eyes! The most incredible thing, a thing which he has not conceived to be even remotely possible, has happened and confronts him as an accomplished fact. On the throne, that his noble father, a man characterised by the highest virtues of a ruler and hero, had occupied for so many years with such conspicuous honour, by the side of the wife who for thirty years had enjoyed the love of the tenderest of husbands, he now beholds his uncle, a boastful, sensual, thoroughly egotistical hypocrite who, thinking only of his own advantage, and completely ruled by his own appetites, seeks to attach men to his service by flattery. Hamlet is amazed to see the incredible happen, to see the courtiers, and even his own mother treat this 'Vice of kings,' who in every respect is the complete opposite of the late ruler, in exactly the same manner as they had but recently treated his noble father, with the same officious zeal on the part of the courtiers, with the same tender devotion on the part of his mother.

"What he sees is more than sufficient at a single blow to subvert the optimistic view of life, which had sprung from his idealistic bent. With deep sorrow he recognises that the majority of mankind do not think and feel as he does, that in their minds the two ideas of *power* and *good-*

ness are far from being so closely connected as in his own, rather that power alone is sufficient to dazzle people and to dispose them, out of vanity or for their own advantage, to serve the most depraved of men if he but have power; nay more, power is the very idol which people worship in their hearts. Indeed, those who used to make mouths at his uncle while his father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats apiece for a miniature of his uncle now that the latter has become the most powerful man in the country. ''Sblood,' Hamlet exclaims, 'there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.' This 'something more than natural' is just the fact that people serve mere power not only because they expect advantage from it, which would, after all, be quite natural, but because in their hearts power has usurped the place of the chief good and thus has become their idol.

"With what grief and bitterness he is filled at this overthrow of his ideal world is already evident from his first soliloquy:

> 'O, that this too-too solid flesh would melt,
> Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!
> Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
> His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!
> How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
> Seem to me all the uses of this world!
> Fie on't! O, fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
> That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
> Possess it merely. That it should come to this!'

"Hamlet feels sorrow and indignation not only at single events, such as the death of his father or the hasty marriage of his mother; he is above all profoundly agitated and beside himself on recognising the dreadful truth as to the real nature of this world. This is evident from passages

like those just quoted, and is also a natural result of his high and noble mind.

"Complete man that he is in every sense, Hamlet is also complete, that is, inexorably logical, in his manner of reflection. Every superficiality, every deceptive outward appearance, is repugnant to him, his thoughts therefore do not dwell on the single fact, but constantly seek to discover its inner, fundamental cause, that general law which reveals itself in each individual case. The want of principle in the courtiers, the faithlessness of his mother, the inability of men to appreciate and honour true merit, hateful and ignominious as these moral defects are in themselves, are after all for Hamlet only examples of the general egoism, want of moral freedom, and narrow-mindedness of mankind. The profoundly painful experiences, therefore, that he has passed through after his father's death, have not only filled him with indignation at single persons from whom he had expected different conduct, but have utterly deprived him of all joy and delight in this world and thus also in life itself. Faith in the real goodness of men, which had hitherto been for him a spur and impulse to productive activity, is for him annihilated and lost.

"Entirely altruistic by nature, and hence incapable of being impelled to action by egotistical motives, Hamlet, now that he has lost disinterested joy in working hand in hand and in a common cause with his fellow-men, lacks all motive for employing his great latent talents and powers. But since a life without aim or purpose, an existence without activity, is no life at all, it is only too natural that the deadly feeling of the soul's paralysis during this crisis should directly suggest to Hamlet, as it would at such a juncture to all other young men of genius, the idea of death. Hence his monologue:

'To be, or not to be, — that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die, — to sleep, —
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, — 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished.'

"Now, the further course in the development of highly gifted natures is this, that once having arrived at a recognition of the true condition of this world, they no longer seek to accommodate themselves to the world, but rather the world to themselves. A man like Hamlet, who is too disinterested to act from selfish motives, but who has also, through his recognition of the real character of men, lost all his joy in co-operating with them, will, as soon as he has passed through the crisis during which he must mentally assimilate his new experiences, and has finally been spurred into renewed activity by life itself, develop an activity of a kind not like, but entirely contrary to that of other men.

"If most men in their actions commonly pursue some practical purpose which serves their personal interests, if, in general, they work only for the sake of that purpose, if they only labour in order to enjoy the reward of their labours, then the actions of men of genius may be said, in a certain sense, to be without purpose, to be mere play. Great men look down upon the world. It is not the success of their activity which affords them their reward, it is in the activity itself rather that they find their highest enjoyment; hence the grand, bold manner of acting that characterises men of genius, whose delight is not in pos-

session, but in the struggle for it. Hence also the sympathy of Hamlet, the one great man for the other great man, the 'delicate and tender prince, whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd, makes mouths at the invisible event,' and who exposes 'what is mortal and unsure to all that fortune, death, and danger dare, even for an eggshell.' 'Rightly to be great,' Hamlet adds further, 'is not to stir without great argument, but greatly to find quarrel in a straw when honour's at the stake.' Therefore it is also Fortinbras whose election Hamlet prophesies, adding, 'he has my dying voice.' It is Fortinbras who finally occupies the position that Hamlet should have filled. The grand and bold nature of Fortinbras is only another side of Hamlet's own character.

"As soon as Hamlet, therefore, should have passed through the intermediate stage of his inner development — and he could not for ever have remained in it, since life itself, after all, forces one into action and decision — as soon as he should have assumed a definite attitude towards the world in accordance with his newly acquired knowledge and with his own nature, his actions would at once have become great and distinguished. But no time for this was to be granted him; before he could 'make a prologue to his brains,' that is, before his future line of conduct had become clear to him, and before he had readjusted his relations in general towards the world as he now knew it, his enemies had begun the play, pressing it to a finish.

"Ever since Goethe's elucidations on the subject in 'Wilhelm Meister,' too much stress has been laid on the difficulty of the task imposed on Hamlet. Either the task was explained as very difficult in itself, if not as altogether impracticable, or the difficulty was transferred to the character of the hero himself, who, by pursuing two differ-

ent aims, revenge for his father's murder and preservation of his own moral purity, finally failed in both.

"In refutation of the view, that the execution of Hamlet's revenge is prevented by his moral scruples, we lay particular stress on his peculiar conduct after he has killed Polonius as well as on his behaviour towards Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and his later utterances on the subject. From all this, indeed, as well as from his general character, it is quite evident that Hamlet is anything rather than a moralist anxious not to lay himself open to blame by his actions. Such considerations are quite foreign to his bold and free nature. After he has killed Polonius in his mother's apartment and has discovered his mistake, he does not appear at all crushed on becoming aware of what he has done; it hardly affects him. For, recognising Polonius, he exclaims:

> 'Thou wretched, rash intruding fool, farewell!
> I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;
> Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.'

And immediately proceeding in what was his original purpose, passing as it were to the order of the day, he says to the queen:

> 'Leave wringing of your hands: peace! sit you down,
> And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,
> If it be made of penetrable stuff;
> If damnèd custom have not brass'd it so,
> That it is proof and bulwark against sense.'

"That this is not the behaviour of a moralist who anxiously weighs the right and wrong of each matter, must forcibly strike every unprejudiced person. Not until he has finished with his mother does he again turn to the

dead Polonius, with words that express sorrow, it is true, but that are far from indicating deep remorse:

> 'For this same lord,
> I do repent: but Heaven hath pleased it so,
> To punish me with this and this with me,
> That I must be their scourge and minister.
> I will bestow him, and will answer well
> The death I gave him.'

"Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, his two companions on the journey to England, he sends to their destruction by means of a substituted letter, and to Horatio's remark, 'So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't,' Hamlet replies:

> 'Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
> They are not near my conscience; their defeat
> Does by their own insinuation grow:
> 'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes
> Between the pass and fell-incensèd points
> Of mighty opposites.'

"This tendency of Hamlet's to make light of his own actions reminds one vividly of Goethe's saying: 'The man who acts is always devoid of conscience. No one has any conscience except the man who pauses to reflect.'[1] In fact Hamlet remains inactive, not because he desires to keep himself morally pure, but for quite different reasons. He is far too little of an egoist to be always thinking about his spotlessness; for the more disinterested a man is, the less will he weigh the results to himself of what he does, and the more exclusively will he keep in view any purpose which he has once determined on. The greater

[1] *Criticisms, Reflections, and Maxims.* Translated by W. B. Rönnfeld, p. 166.

a man is, the less importance will he attach to his own self, and the more boldly and consistently will he direct his doings towards a particular aim without any secondary considerations.

"Of course he who is afraid of fouling his hands will never set a dirty house in order; but our hero is not a man to be deterred from consistent action by anxious moral considerations merely. This appears from those passages already quoted in proof of his inherent boldness and sternness, and must be evident to every impartial judge from his demeanour towards each individual in the drama. Goethe is undoubtedly right when he says that 'the man who acts is always devoid of conscience.' Indeed, no act, however unimportant, can be performed in this world of countless existences without in some way damaging the interests of others. He who would be absolutely just to everyone would have to remain entirely inactive, and anxious consideration for details and individuals would make any great action performed for the benefit of humanity quite impossible. Therefore even Christ Himself said to the man who addressed Him as 'good master,' 'Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, that is, God.'

"The nobler a man is, the less will he think of himself in all he does, the less will he be influenced by petty and selfish interests, and the better will he be able to do great and important things; he will keep his great object steadily in view, while lesser natures will be turned aside by considerations of fear or profit.

"In truth Hamlet is a man of eminently energetic character, whose decision, when demanded by circumstances, is swayed neither by moral reflections nor by any irrelevant considerations. The cause of Hamlet's inaction is not that the task imposed on him is too difficult in itself

or personally for him, but must be sought solely in his temporary mental depression. Our hero's native boldness, sternness, brusqueness, nay, even unscrupulousness, without which great actions are impossible, are plainly evident in passages like that in which, in answer to Horatio's urgent prayer not to follow the ghost, the prince says:

'Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again; I'll follow it.'

"When his friends attempt to hold him back by force, he tears himself free with the words:

'My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Némean lion's nerve.
Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen;
By Heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me!
I say, away! — Go on; I'll follow thee.'

"The grim independence of his nature is also proved by the way in which he addresses his father's ghost when the latter calls upon Hamlet's friends to swear. In answer to the subterranean voice commanding 'Swear,' he exclaims:

'Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, truepenny?
Come on, — you hear this fellow in the cellarage, —
Consent to swear.'

"To the same harsh features in his character are attributable the way in which he treats Ophelia, and his behaviour after he has slain Polonius. In the fight with

the pirate, Hamlet is the first to board the enemy's ship. But in the scene at Ophelia's grave we have the most significant outburst of Hamlet's energy, which had only been temporarily checked by his mental depression. At Laertes' boastful exclamations of grief, Hamlet becomes fully conscious of his own worth and real energy, and this it is which determines him to step forth with the words:

'What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Cónjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,
Hamlet the Dane!'

And immediately after, with reference to Laertes' bragging, he exclaims:

"Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? Woo't tear thyself?
Woo't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?
I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I.'

"In truth, the cause of Hamlet's hesitation is found neither in the difficulty of his task as such, nor in the hindrances presented by his own character, that is to say, in fear or moral considerations; for on other occasions, as has been proved, he by no means shows himself a man whose actions are determined by such motives. It is rather because his whole mental life is engrossed and all his desires and endeavours are arrested for the time being by the recognition of the fundamental error that has so long influenced all his views of the world and man, that every decision and purposeful activity in themselves become hateful to him. This mental crisis claims all his thoughts and aspira-

tions, and paralyses his natural energy in so far as systematic action is concerned. If we wish to arrive at a real understanding of the play, it cannot be too strongly emphasised that such a crisis has occurred in the hero's mental life, and in fact we see that, even before the appearance of the ghost that urges him to revenge as a duty, he is already filled with the same despairing grief at the moral weakness of man that affects him so deeply afterwards. We have only to listen to the despondent words of his first soliloquy above quoted.

"In characterising Hamlet's true attitude towards the task imposed on him by his father it must be noted that it falls on him as any other task laid on a man most deeply engrossed by an entirely different object, in this case the attainment of a new view of life, would do. Impelled by outward circumstances as well as by passionate excitement, which occasionally possesses him, he certainly sometimes feels himself urged to perform this task, but is not forced in his innermost soul to do so. He fitfully makes attempts to fulfil his obligations, but, as these are too foreign to his innermost nature, he again and again delays the execution of revenge; nay, sometimes he forgets his task, till he is reminded of it by peculiar occurrences. For instance, after the actor's speech in the second act Hamlet exclaims:

'O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That from her working all his visage wann'd;
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears. Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damn'd defeat was made.'

Afterwards, thinking of Fortinbras' bold action, Hamlet says:

'How stand I then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That for a fantasy and trick of fame
Go to their graves like beds.'

"When Hamlet really proceeds to action in his father's cause, he merely injures himself: we need only call attention to the play by the performance of which Hamlet shows the king his hand without taking the necessary measures to protect himself against the crowned murderer's probable desperate attempts on his life. The whole case would appear under a different aspect if Hamlet were a selfish, morally and mentally biassed man like Laertes for instance, whom the poet, with deliberate intention, has confronted with a similar task, and who, thirsting for revenge, in complete contrast with the morally free and

noble character of Hamlet, falls upon the immediate author of his misfortune, like a dog upon the stick with which he is beaten. A selfish man is driven to blind fury and revenge by every insult or injustice that he considers a personal wrong. The man of moral inferiority looks upon every injustice done him as a disgrace not to be suffered without loss of dignity in his own eyes and in those of others. The morally great character of Hamlet, on the other hand, is superior to every personal insult. The strongest motive, nay, the only real motive of all revenge, that of personal injury, is not wanting in our hero, but it governs his mind too little to influence him permanently in his actions.

"It is only natural that the story told by the ghost in the first act and subsequently the representation of the murder by the players should awaken with the greatest vividness also in Hamlet's mind a conception of what had taken place, and should in him too, though only for a short time, fan to a mighty flame that passion for revenge which slumbers in every human soul; and so, immediately after the play, when on his way to answer his mother's summons he finds the king in prayer, he is actually ready to strike him down. But the strong feeling of revenge that really governs him *at that moment* prevents the deed. For Hamlet himself, in fact, death would be a deliverance; it seemed therefore to him no revenge to kill the king at the very moment when the murderer is purifying his soul by prayer. No, if Hamlet seeks revenge, he must have a real revenge; mere death is 'hire and salary,' not punishment, to him to whom life is a burden.[1]

[1] See Montaigne's *Essayes*, translated by John Florio, London 1603, B. II, Ch. 3; London 1897, vol. IV, pp. 228—30: "Every man seeth, it is more bravery and disdaine for one to beat his enemie, than make an end of him; and to keep him at a bay, than make him die. Moreover, that the desire of revenge is thereby alayed: and better contented; for,

"The opinion has frequently been expressed that Hamlet forgetting his own weakness or his moral scruples deceives himself when he thinks that he here again lets the moment for action pass only intending to find one more favourable to a really effective revenge. But when we judge his character according to the preceding estimate, such a view is entirely out of the question, for, on the one hand, he is capable of displaying the most uncompromising and fearless energy, and on the other, he is perfectly true to himself as well as to others; so that it is idle to speak of cowardice, of excessive sensitiveness, or of self-deception in connection with him. The most satisfactory way, therefore, of dealing with this point is to take the scene as the

it aymeth at nothing so much as to give or shew a motion or feeling of revenge onely of her self. And that's the reason we do not challenge a beast, or fall upon a stone, when it hurts us, because they are incapable to feele our revenge. And to kill a man, is to shelter him from our offence. . . .

So ought revenge to be moaned, when he on whom it is inflicted, looseth the meanes to endure or feele it. For, even as the revenger, wil see the action of the revenge, that so he may feele the pleasure of it, so must he on whom he is revenged, both see and feele, that he may hereby receive both repentance and griefe. He shal rew it, say we. And though he receive a stab or a blow with a pistoll on his head, shal we think he will repent? Contrariwise, if we marke him wel, we shal perceive that in falling, he makes a moe or bob at us. Hee is farre from repenting, when he rather seemes to be beholding to us: In asmuch as we affoord him the favourablest office of life, which is to make him dye speedily and as it were insensibly. We are left to shift up and downe, runne and trot, and squat heere and there, and al to avoyd the officers, or escape the Magistrates that pursue us; and he is at rest. *To kill a man, is good to escape a future offence, and not revenge the wrongs past.* It is rather an action of feare, than of bravery: Of precaution, than of courage: Of defence, than of an enterprise. It is apparant, that by it, we quit both the true end of revenge, and the respect of our reputation: If he live we feare he wil or may charge us with the like. It is not against him, it is for thee, thou riddest thy selfe of him. . . .

If we thought by vertue to be ever superiors unto our enemy, and at our pleasure gourmandize him, it would much grieve us he should escape us, as he doth in dying: We rather endevour to vanquish surely then honourably. And in our quarrels we rather seeke for the end, then for the glory."

poet has given it. In order to understand it fully we must remember that the treacherous murder of the noble and heroic king has just been acted by the players in all its details, so that even a callous sinner like Claudius is touched to the quick and seeks to recover his calmness of mind by prayer. How much more powerfully then must the performance have acted upon the excitable feelings of a man like Hamlet; indeed, he himself gives expression to the excitement produced by the play in the words:

'Now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on.'

"A single drop would suffice to make the cup run over, the slightest hostile move on the part of Claudius and he would be lost. Then Hamlet finds him kneeling in prayer, in an attitude which is furthest removed from all hostility. Cool reflection in Hamlet's mind thus escapes the danger of being surprised and overmastered by a gust of passion, and cool reflection tells him that the burning rage within him would by no means be satisfied by merely slaying the villain. So he goes on his way, leaving the king unharmed. After this Hamlet's anger evaporates again and his mind becomes once more imbued with the profounder sorrow for all that is base and evil in human nature generally. In this mood the king is to him nothing more than an instance of the universal corruption of humanity, merely 'a thing — of nothing.' His indignation is quickly replaced by that contempt and indifference which are the king's best protection: Claudius is, after all, merely food for worms:

'*Hamlet.* A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Hamlet. Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.'

"Although Hamlet in fact has the intention of avenging the murder of his father, yet this intention possesses no impelling interest for him, his mind is not filled with it, and it is eclipsed by that fundamental significance which Hamlet attaches to the events which have occurred. That a man could act thus, and towards his own brother, fills him with a horror called forth by the contemplation of the evil that lies hidden as a germ in every human soul. He says to Ophelia, 'I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me.'

"If in removing Claudius he could remove all evil out of the world, he would strike at once. But as it is, Claudius is for him only a representative of this wicked world. 'The king is a thing — of nothing.' That which has most profoundly hurt and wounded Hamlet is not the one man Claudius, it is the baseness of the whole world, nay, the baseness that he discovers as a potential agency in his own heart, as is plainly shown by his words to Ophelia above quoted. In a word, the question for Hamlet does not turn at all on his carrying out his revenge or not, for the matter in itself is of far too little significance for him, it even, at times, slips entirely from his memory. He may perform the deed or leave it undone, without this making any essential difference in his inner state of mind, for the existence or non-existence of Claudius depends on accidental outward circumstances and has nothing to do with Hamlet's real grief. 'The body is with the king,' the king carries his body about with him, that is, his mortality. Whether Hamlet stabs him to death to-day, or whether the king dies naturally to-morrow, what does it matter to the prince!

"It is primarily this indifference that protects Claudius so long, especially as the latter is careful not to cross Hamlet's path in a directly hostile manner. As soon as he does so he is lost, as is proved by Hamlet's sudden action in his mother's apartment; for there Hamlet supposed that the eavesdropper behind the arras hangings was the king listening to the conversation between the prince and his mother. This danger is also recognised by Claudius, and therefore he resolves to remove Hamlet from his presence. With reference to the death of Polonius the king says:

'O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there.'

"When Hamlet in calm moments too desires to carry out his revenge, it is more in the sense of an obligation than from any deeper impulse; he looks upon it as a duty, because his judgment is still influenced by the opinion of the world, and not because the deed is inwardly impressed upon him as a necessity. Something of his earlier view of life still remains, from which he has not yet completely detached himself, as his mind is still midway towards the conception of the new one. In the opinion of men revenge is requisite to wipe out an indignity; and as Hamlet had been previously gladly inclined to conform to the requirements of the world, since he had looked upon these as right and reasonable, so even now some remnant of this regard for the judgment of the world still clings to him, and he considers himself bound to take revenge, because to do so is universally held to be necessary for the restoration of one's honour. Hence his words:

'Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?

Tweaks me by th' nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? who does me this, ha?
'Swounds, I should take it.'

"What the world thinks in this respect, his father's spirit, still in purgatory and not yet perfectly purified, also thinks. But Hamlet, although he loves and reveres his father, not merely because he is his father, but because he is so noble and gallant a man — Hamlet, the man of genius, remains uninfluenced by relationship in itself and will not be driven to revenge even by the sincere piety he feels towards his father. Even the will of a loved and revered parent is not to be simply adopted by Hamlet as *his own will*, and, in fact, he regards the task imposed upon him as a heavy burden because it is foreign to his innermost soul:

'The time is out of joint: O cursèd spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!'

"The closest connection exists between this standpoint and his peculiarly grim and bluntly independent attitude towards the ghost, immediately after he has been profoundly agitated by the latter's revelations. For up to the moment when the dreadful phantom appears to him Hamlet had preserved his inner freedom and mental repose, as is evident from his lengthy, purely objective comments on the intemperate habits of the Danes. But immediately after the apparition which had produced such a profound impression on him, the reaction sets in in Hamlet's mind, and he shakes the powerful impression that has less influenced his will than given clearness to his thought off again. While he is requesting his friends on their oath to keep the matter secret, not because he wants to elaborate any plan of revenge, but because, in accordance with his natural impulse towards freedom, he wishes

to be entirely unhampered in his resolutions, the ghost calls out 'Swear!' from below, thinking that his son is acting as he does only in the ghost's own interest in order to carry out the father's express desire. The contrast between the two quite different intentions, the son's when he makes his friends promise silence, and the ghost's when by calling out 'Swear!' he supports what he supposes to be his son's purpose in his own, the father's, interest, this contrast it is that causes Hamlet, in his desperate mood, in a kind of grim humour, to call out laughing, 'Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, truepenny?' He draws his friends away to another spot, as if to remove himself from the ghost's influence. 'Come on,' he exclaims, 'you hear this fellow in the cellarage, — consent to swear.' But when the ghost, in this new spot, again calls out 'Swear!' Hamlet, in his self-dependent manner, and averse as he is to being influenced by others, says,

> '*Hic et ubique?* then we'll shift our ground. —
> Come hither, gentlemen,
> And lay your hands again upon my sword,
> Never to speak of this that you have heard:
> Swear by my sword.'

"And when the ghost's 'Swear!' is heard once more, Hamlet answers him, as if giving an unwilling attention to a stubborn opponent who will not be pacified:

> 'Well said, old mole! canst work i' the ground so fast?
> A worthy pioneer! — Once more remove, good friends.'

"So the act in itself, the slaying or the deposition of Claudius, is not in contradiction with Hamlet's nature. He could trample under foot this 'Vice of kings,' who for him is only a 'body,' a 'thing,' a 'thing of nothing,' under given circumstances, as one would trample upon

a noxious insect, without feeling himself an avenger. But certain commentators have also suggested that our hero should have assumed the functions of a judge, without considering that it is impossible for a man possessed of so clear a perception of the original moral weakness inherent in every human soul, and rooted in all human nature, to set himself up as a judge. Exactly in this sense we hear him express his sorrow for the death of Polonius. He looks upon it as a chastisement that heaven has laid upon him, to have the punishing of the insidious old fellow entrusted to him, in direct contrast with Laertes, who even begs King Claudius to allow him to be the instrument of vengeance.

"There is, indeed, something dangerous in Hamlet's nature, as he himself calls out to Laertes while grappling with him in Ophelia's grave. But he is of too noble, superior, and chivalrous a nature lightly and without further consideration to punish a man for an injury however great, unless he be directly attacked. But had he again got a definite purpose to pursue, had he again found a place for himself in this world, a work to do, a sphere of action, he would at once have removed King Claudius had he stood in his way, as lightly as he would have pushed aside a stone that barred his passage. Hamlet would have destroyed Claudius just as one kills a poisonous insect, not for the sake of revenge or in the capacity of its judge, but merely to render it innocuous. But for the pessimism which had arrested all Hamlet's creative impulses, but for his despairing want of faith in the reality of things, but for his grief at the glaring contrast between fair outer semblance and hidden inner corruption, but for all these things which had deprived him for a time of all pleasure in existence, and destroyed in him all desire for a continuance of labour in this world of decep-

tive appearances, he would have set up some aim for himself, imposed upon himself some task, and then have carried it out with that indefatigable energy, with all that contemplative calm, which characterised his great nature. Hamlet's talents are those of one born to rule, and thus he was obviously the man to take possession of the throne; for, as Fortinbras says at the conclusion of the play, 'he was likely, had he been put on, t'have proved most royally.' But pessimism excludes all assumption of a mission, for in a world in which everything appears vain and hollow, the motive for activity directed towards any definite purpose cannot be found. Such pessimism in its extreme form is, however, but a natural consequence of the overthrow of the youthful optimism that belongs to an idealistic disposition.

"In course of time nature, of its own accord, applies its curative process, and such a mental crisis gives birth to that virile maturity that looks upon the world neither as a consummation of all that is perfect, nor as a prison full of tortures, but as a field for the employment of one's own creative power. There is nothing to prevent us from assuming that, sooner or later, Hamlet also would have fought his way to a life of conscious aim and purpose, if only time had been granted him to assume a well-considered attitude towards life in general, and to regain what is the primary condition of all systematic action, namely, calmness of mind.

"To sum up our previous remarks briefly: he who wishes really to understand Hamlet must constantly bear in mind that his nature is that of a man of genius, in which extremes meet and call each other forth. In him are combined the humblest unpretentiousness with the fullest self-dependence of character, the most perfect modesty of demeanour with an eminent boldness in action, the nicest

considerateness towards others with inexorable candour, a mode of thought which pursues things to their uttermost consequences with the greatest distrust of his own judgment, the most uncompromising condemnation of the evil deeds and moral weaknesses of men with the most intense and profound love for mankind, the highest idealism of disposition with the keenest eye for the true relations of life, a most tender conscience that even recognises and condemns the potential elements of all evil in himself, with the untrammelled actions of the real hero who trusts in God alone. His is a personality indomitable in its energy and yet softened by the most delicate feelings; he is a whole man, an intellect of the highest rank, in a word, a genius."

NOTE.

For years the questions: What kind of man was Hamlet? What passed in his mind? Why did he behave so strangely? weighed upon my mind as a "dark problem," as Goethe called it in his later years. One day, on contemplating afresh the wonderful figure of the Danish prince, that remarkable passage of the Bible occurred to me which must touch every deeply thinking man, the passage which is found in all the first three Gospels, and in Matthew xii. 46 runs as follows: "While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever

shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

I asked myself, does not Hamlet perhaps take an attitude towards his father, similar to that of Christ towards His relations? Is not Hamlet also a great man, a man of lofty genius, who in his striving after the highest perfection, with his exalted sense for the universal and world-wide, feels himself unduly fettered by the claims of the particular and limited circle to which he accidentally belongs? What if Hamlet, indeed, vaguely feels this connection with the eternal as one peculiar to his innermost nature, but has not yet become fully conscious of its existence? What if he still believes himself bound by personal considerations, obliged to satisfy the claims of his own narrow circle, whilst his innermost soul struggles to soar far above it? Is not the impulse to revenge in that case perhaps only a superficial and occasional one, so that furious retaliation for a dreadful wrong by no means springs in him from a deep need as with Laertes? If his soul is in truth fixed only on the chief good, the *summum bonum*, does not the personal relation to his father then altogether lack the compelling, authoritative significance that it would have for an ordinary mortal, for one "born of woman" and not of the Spirit? But if it is not sorrow for the loss of his father, however great this may be, that puts him beside himself, nor the question whether or how he shall carry out his revenge, what then is it that so moves him, that to him the earth seems only "a sterile promontory?" Is it not rather his deep grief at the destruction of his fair ideal of the world, the overthrow of his optimistic view of life, that, for the time being, paralyses his energy, and temporarily makes him unfit for any action on a grand scale according to those plans which he might himself have originally con-

ceived? Too greatly moved by his longing for the highest form of existence, impelled towards the eternal, he is unable to attach his soul to what is petty and personal, and to allow himself to be influenced by family relations or by regard for the opinion of the world. But not having, as yet, attained to a complete and clear consciousness of his own nature, and of his attitude towards his near and far surroundings, and still completely taken up with grief for the loss of his fair ideal of this world, he exposes an unarmed side to the assaults of fate, and falls, because just at this decisive moment he is overwhelmed by the unscrupulous rascality of his enemies.

In the light of the words of Christ, whose soul was devoted to the highest good and who was therefore free from narrow family bonds, I had solved the problem of the Hamlet tragedy, even before I had become acquainted with the hundreds of previous explanations. Not till after some time did Hermann Baumgart's book "*Die Hamlet-Tragödie und ihre Kritik,*" 1877, first come into my hands, and much later still, after I had already worked out my theory in all its details, I saw August Döring's interesting book "*Shakespeare's Hamlet seinem Grundgedanken und Inhalte nach erläutert,*" 1865, that has since appeared in a new form under the title of "*Hamlet. Ein neuer Versuch zur ästhetischen Erklärung der Tragödie,*" 1898. Both these noteworthy works of Baumgart and of Döring I went into minutely in my dissertation on "*Das psychologische Problem in der Hamlet-Tragödie,*" 1890, and specially pointed out the merit of Döring as one of the first who drew attention to the change of the hero's optimistic view of life to a profoundly pessimistic one. In the same place I showed how far, nevertheless, Döring went astray. Above all he commits the mistake of representing Ham-

let's deep sorrow for the corruption of human nature, which is exactly a proof of the prince's high and idealistic disposition, of his noble, healthy, and inspired sentiments, as a morbid, altogether blameworthy trait, and a fatal aberration. In the next place, Döring, it is true, uses the words "*Genie*" and "*genial*" with reference to Hamlet, but without entering, as I did, into a psychological exposition of the essence of genius, and without clearly and intelligibly connecting it with the character of the Danish prince. "*Genie*" and "*genial*" remain in Döring's work expressions of quite general purport, to which any or no meaning may be attached. In my essay on "*Hamlets Alter*," in *Shakespeare Jahrbuch* for 1900, I pointed out the fact that, in the churchyard scene, Shakespeare lays such pronounced stress on Hamlet's being thirty years of age, because he wished to exclude the possibility of certain features in Hamlet's character being attributed to his youthful immaturity instead of to his genius. Even at a mature age, as has been shown in our previous exposition, genius still possesses all the ingenuousness, freshness, and daring, all that "purely intellectual tendency" and that "eccentricity suggestive of genius" that are usually connected only with the age of childhood and youth. "Every genius is even for this reason a big child," says Schopenhauer; "he looks out into the world as into something strange, a play, and therefore with purely objective interest."[1]

But Döring is so far from recognising that Hamlet's nature is that of a man of genius, that he can only explain these features in the prince's character by making him, in spite of Shakespeare's own express statement, a youth of nineteen. He even goes the length of asserting, "we

[1] *The World as Will and Idea.* Translated by R. B. Haldane & J. Kemp. 6th ed., 1907-9, vol. III, pp. 163-4.

must defend the play from the thoughtless trespasses of the poet himself."

Of all that is either right or wrong in Döring's book, Friedrich Paulsen ("*Hamlet;*" *Deutsche Rundschau*, 1889, re-cast in "*Schopenhauer, Hamlet, Mephistopheles,*" 1900) has adopted only what is wrong. In Döring's opinion it is a morbid disorder of the mind that places the hero "in hatred and scorn in opposition to the world," and that hinders the prince from taking appropriate action. According to Paulsen's conception, "the famous hesitation is produced by a mental state in Hamlet which borders on the morbid." Hamlet is "morally poisoned.... Natural, healthy instincts are withered in him, he can no longer feel anger, hatred, or grief, still less can he feel healthy joy and love." He calls himself "a dull and muddy-mettled rascal," and according to Paulsen justly so. Hamlet's deeds are "misdeeds and not merely from the point of view of the penal law." He is also a sensual man, and "Ophelia does not seem to have fared better with Hamlet than poor Gretchen with Faust." In his essay in the "*Deutsche Rundschau*" (XV, 8, p. 243) Paulsen thought he detected Hamlet's sensuality in the fact that when the players introduce themselves to him, "his eye was at once directed to the feet of the *actress.*" Hamlet, namely, notices that the young actor, who according to the custom of that time took female parts, had grown taller, and refers to this with the words, "your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine," addressing him jocosely as a woman. This led to Paulsen's mistake; he forgot that in Shakespeare's time the players were all men. Hamlet means to say that the young man will soon have outgrown his female parts, and moreover as his voice is likely to break, he adds, "Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold,

be not crack'd within the ring," that is, have not lost the right sound.

Just as Paulsen misses the meaning of this passage, when he tries in this impossible manner to prove Hamlet's sensuality, so he altogether misses the real, deep import of the Hamlet tragedy.

For a fuller exposition I may refer the reader to my collected Hamlet studies, "*Hamlet ein Genie*," 1902. —

V.

GOETHE'S SELF-REPRESENTATION IN FAUST.

LIKE Shakespeare in his "Hamlet," Goethe has erected an everlasting monument to himself in his "Faust." In this unique drama the poet has mirrored his own æsthetic perceptivity, his own philosophic mode of thought, his own creative activity, and has given expression to all that touched his inmost soul. Let us, firstly, consider Faust's æsthetic perceptivity. How deep and heartfelt is his feeling for beauty, how readily he loses himself in the contemplation of the outward splendour of the world, how thirstily his eyes, on his walk with Wagner, drink in the light of the setting sun that with its golden radiance illumines and transfigures all the surrounding landscape. He longs for wings to carry him in the path of the great luminary, and so to absorb all the glory which its brilliance conjures up:

"But let us not, by such despondence, so
The fortune of this hour embitter!
Mark how, beneath the evening sunlight's glow,
The green-embosomed houses glitter!
The glow retreats, done is the day of toil;
It yonder hastes, new fields of life exploring;
Ah, that no wing can lift me from the soil,
Upon its track to follow, follow soaring!

Then would I see eternal Evening gild
The silent world beneath me glowing,
On fire each mountain-peak, with peace each valley filled,
The silver brook to golden rivers flowing.
The mountain-chain, with all its gorges deep,
Would then no more impede my godlike motion;
And now before mine eyes expands the ocean
With all its bays, in shining sleep!
Yet, finally, the weary god is sinking;
The new-born impulse fires my mind, —
I hasten on, his beams eternal drinking,
The Day before me and the Night behind,
Above me heaven unfurled, the floor of waves beneath me, —
A glorious dream! though now the glories fade."[1]

How extraordinarily susceptible he is also to the beauty of the human form, to what ecstasy he is transported by the first glimpse of the exquisite charm of woman's shape seen in the magic mirror in the Witches' Kitchen, the following verses show:

"What do I see? What heavenly form revealed
Shows through the glass from Magic's fair dominions!
O lend me, Love, the swiftest of thy pinions,
And bear me to her beauteous field!
Ah, if I leave this spot with fond designing,
If I attempt to venture near,
Dim, as through gathering mist, her charms appear! —
A woman's form, in beauty shining!
Can woman, then, so lovely be?
And must I find her body, there reclining,
Of all the heavens the bright epitome?
Can Earth with such a thing be mated?"

[1] Bayard Taylor's Translation is used throughout.

It is of the greatest interest, and was probably so designed by the poet with full intent, that Faust should show this rapture at the sight of a perfect female form even before he had taken the witch's rejuvenating potion. The draught, therefore, rejuvenates only his body; his soul and mind were already previously capable of feeling the greatest enthusiasm for the beauty of the world and of the human form. It is true, indeed, that the younger a man is, and the more vitality and strength he still possesses, the greater will be the joy, the delight, the amorous passion with which he views everything around him, and the more beautiful will everything appear to him; for love beautifies and irradiates all things. Hence it is that Mephistopheles expects that the rejuvenated Faust will soon fancy he recognises, in some one of the women brought in contact with him, the paragon among women, the fairest of the fair. "Thou'lt find, this drink thy blood compelling, each woman beautiful as Helen," Mephistopheles says to himself sarcastically. In a similar manner, Shakespeare, in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," makes Theseus say, "The lover, all as frantic, sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt." In reality it is not the classic beauty of form of the Greek Helen, but the naïve, charming innocence of the fair German Gretchen that first delights Faust on regaining his youth:

"By Heaven, the girl is wondrous fair!
Of all I've seen, beyond compare;
So sweetly virtuous and pure,
And yet a little pert, be sure!
The lip so red, the cheek's clear dawn,
I'll not forget while the world rolls on!
How she cast down her timid eyes,
Deep in my heart imprinted lies:

How short and sharp of speech was she,
Why, 'twas a real ecstasy!"

Afterwards it is the classic beauty of form that Faust turns to; the place of the naïve German Gretchen is taken by the ideal of female beauty, typified in the figure of the Greek Helen, the symbol of the highest art in Goethe's sense. Faust descends into the empire of the Mothers, the eternal Ideas, to conjure up the fair shape, and when it appears he exclaims rapturously:

"Have I still eyes? Deep in my being springs
The fount of Beauty, in a torrent pouring!
A heavenly gain my path of terror brings.
The world was void, and shut to my exploring, —
And, since my priesthood, how hath it been graced!
Enduring 'tis, desirable, firm-based.
And let my breath of being blow to waste,
If I for thee unlearn my sacred duty!
The form, that long erewhile my fancy captured,
That from the magic mirror so enraptured,
Was but a frothy phantom of such beauty!
'Tis Thou, to whom the stir of all my forces,
The essence of my passion's courses, —
Love, fancy, worship, madness, — here I render!"

That Faust descends to the Mothers, into the empire of eternal Ideas, in order to conjure up the shape of Helen, the consummation of all beauty, is of profound significance and points to the doctrine to which we too have endeavoured to draw attention, namely, that what we call the beauty of a thing is nothing but the idea of that thing, seen, as it were, with our eyes. Every object exists and develops itself according to a fixed plan, following quite a definite idea. The more complete, in the first place, this idea itself is, and the more completely, in the second,

each thing corresponds to its idea, the more beautiful will its outside appearance be to us. For instance, the idea, the plan, the design on which the structure of the human body is based, is, in the first place, on a much higher plane, is in itself more perfect than the idea, the plan, or design according to which the body of a quadruped develops itself. This higher plane of the idea strikes the mind, even on a mere outer view, as that which we call the greater beauty, charm, or grace of the human body as compared with the appearance of the body of a quadruped. But, in the second place, it may be asked how far and to what degree reality corresponds to the idea, to the plan, or design; whether, for instance, a particular human body has been brought to the highest possible perfection as a real expression of the idea on which it is based, or whether outward disturbing influences have checked, retarded, stunted, or crippled the body in its development. The human figure is in general more beautiful than that of a quadruped, but a particular man may be ugly, that is, imperfect in the evolution of the fundamental idea of his body, and again, a particular animal may be beautiful, as the most perfect embodiment possible of the idea that determines its development. There is an endless gradation of such ideas, however, and each single idea can again be embodied or take shape in the most various ways, at one time more, at another less perfectly. These ideas, on which all existence, all life, is based, are, after all, in themselves only outlines, schemes, mere notions remote from any reality that extends in space and time; for indeed, in this world of space and time we have only to do with more or less imperfect embodiments of these outlines or schemes, but never with the absolute ideas themselves. He, therefore, who, like Faust, penetrates into the realm of ideas, finds himself in the fathomless, the time-

less, the unreal, the vague, in the realm of silence, emptiness, and death, of boundless desolation and solitude. Accordingly, when Faust asks, "Where is the way?" the way to the Mothers or eternal Ideas, Mephistopheles answers:

"No way! — To the Unreachable,
Ne're to be trodden! A way to the Unbeseechable,
Never to be besought! Art thou prepared?
There are no locks, no latches to be lifted;
Through endless solitudes shalt thou be drifted.
Hast thou through solitudes and deserts fared?
And hadst thou swum the farthest verge of ocean,
And there the boundless space beheld,
Still hadst thou seen wave after wave in motion,
Even though impending doom thy fear compelled.
Thou hadst seen something, — in the beryl dim
Of peace-lulled seas the sportive dolphins swim;
Hadst seen the flying clouds, sun, moon, and star:
Naught shalt thou see in endless Void afar, —
Not hear thy footstep fall, nor meet
A stable spot to rest thy feet: . . . .
At last a blazing tripod tells thee this,
That there the utterly deepest bottom is.
Its light to thee will then the Mothers show,
Some in their seats, the others stand or go,
At their own will: Formation, Transformation,
The Eternal Mind's eternal recreation,
Forms of all creatures, — there are floating free.
They'll see thee not; for only schemes they see . . . .
Unwilling, I reveal a loftier mystery. —
In solitude are throned the Goddesses,
No Space around them, Place and Time still less;
Only to speak of them embarrasses,
They are The Mothers!"

Mothers the eternal ideas are called, because all that exists owes its being to them, is born of them, springs from their eternal womb. In the deepest solitude, in the "Unreachable," without space or time, the Mothers are enthroned, because ideas themselves are nothing real, palpable, tangible, and hence, as it were, outside the reality of space and time, possess their own, independent existence. The individual, real, palpable, visible thing is always merely the more or less imperfect embodiment of an idea. By developing in quite a definite manner, it shows the efficacy of this idea, but without ever succeeding in absolutely corresponding to it. The Mothers therefore do not see Faust as an individual being, "for only schemes they see;" only the idea of man, the typical man is before their eyes, they do not see the individual thing which can only strive after the ideal without ever attaining to it. Each thing seeks, in developing, to approach more or less closely to the idea on which it is based, but the ideal is never attained. The idea, therefore, never completely becomes reality, in a certain sense it remains only an ideal, a mere idea, something "unbeseechable, not to be besought." All that lives and exists, all reality, is the result of ideas, takes its origin from them; ideas form the "utterly deepest bottom," from which all existence springs; but ideas themselves remain outside that reality which exists in the dimensions of space and time: "No Space around them, Place and Time still less."

He who seeks beauty pure and undefiled, the ideal of beauty, as Faust-Goethe does, cannot, therefore, rest satisfied with mere reality, with the superficial nature of things and its accidental forms, in which the ideal is never perfectly embodied; he must penetrate into the realm of eternal ideas as such, in order to attain to that ideal which alone can satisfy his craving for perfection.

The true artist does not produce a mere facsimile of outward reality; he visions that ideal to which nature in the course of its development strives to give expression, and then, on his part, makes his handiwork a vehicle of this ideal, to the consciousness of which he has been stimulated by the contemplation of the object before him. The true artist sees more in things than the average man of limited capacity.

But it is not only by the outward form of things, by an æsthetic view of them, that a man like Faust-Goethe penetrates into the heart of things, into their inmost character. Even in his mode of thought he remains the spirit "who, scorning all external gleams, the depths of being only prizes," as Mephistopheles expresses it. How intense is Faust's thirst after a knowledge of the innermost connection between all things, how great is his despair at his imperfect ability to quench this thirst by ordinary means!

"I've studied now Philosophy
And Jurisprudence, Medicine. —
And even, alas! Theology, —
From end to end, with labour keen;
And here, poor fool! With all my lore
I stand, no wiser than before:
I'm Magister — yea, Doctor — hight,
And straight or crosswise, wrong or right,
These ten years long, with many woes,
I 've led my scholars by the nose, —
And see, that nothing can be known!
That knowledge cuts me to the bone."

What he has been unable to attain to by the usual means of those scholarly studies that are solely concerned with special subjects and hence never lead to a general

view of life, he now seeks to reach by the help of *magic*, that is, by an inspired, more penetrative, intuitive mode of acquiring knowledge, in which each single thing is always regarded as a living and active part of a whole, the world as a macrocosm, as a unity complete in itself. Even as early as in his essay "After Falconet and about Falconet," published in 1776, and produced in 1775 about the same time as the first fragments of "Faust" were composed, Goethe speaks of the "*magic* world," which so intimately and constantly encircles the great artist and man of genius; and nearly four decades later, in the 15th Book of his "Autobiography," Goethe again speaks of it: "In the end the shortest way to settle the matter, would be to call in the aid of *genius*, which, by its *magical* gifts would decide the contest and satisfy the claims." So also in "Faust" *magic* is the symbolic expression for the power of *genius* which gives man a clearer insight and can, so to say, bring about marvels. Here again, how characteristic is Faust's longing for an insight into the spiritual unity of all being, and how clearly his contempt for all empty phrases is revealed!

"Wherefore, from Magic I seek assistance,
That many a secret perchance I reach
Through spirit-power and spirit-speech,
And thus the bitter task forego
Of saying the things I do not know, —
That I may detect the inmost force
Which binds the world, and guides its course;
Its germs, productive powers explore,
And rummage in empty words no more!"

The sight of the magic sign of the Macrocosm, that is, the unity of the life-producing natural forces in the

universe, revealed by the deep insight of genius, transports him, for a time, with ecstasy:

"Ha! what a sudden rapture leaps from this
I view, through all my senses swiftly flowing!
I feel a youthful, holy, vital bliss
In every vein and fibre newly glowing.
Was it a God, who traced this sign,
With calm across my tumult stealing,
My troubled heart to joy unsealing,
With impulse, mystic and divine,
The powers of Nature here, around my path, revealing?
Am I a God? — so clear mine eyes!
In these pure features I behold
Creative Nature to my soul unfold.
What says the sage, now first I recognise:
'The spirit-world no closures fasten;
Thy sense is shut, thy heart is dead:
Disciple, up! untiring, hasten
To bathe thy breast in morning-red!'
(*He contemplates the sign.*)
How each the Whole its substance gives,
Each in the other works and lives!
Like heavenly forces rising and descending,
Their golden urns reciprocally lending,
With wings that winnow blessing
From Heaven through Earth I see them pressing,
Filling the All with harmony unceasing!"

Yet here also, on a contemplation of the whole of nature, the whole, after all, remains only something viewed from the outside, something whose innermost connection is not understood, whose real inner meaning is unfathomed, a majestic spectacle, but only a spectacle. Faust, however, cannot remain satisfied with a perception of a mere

spectacle, he seeks the innermost connection, the innermost heart of things, their vaguely felt, purely spiritual existence in the all-pervading and all-embracing soul of the universe:

"How grand a show! but, ah! a show alone.
Thee, boundless Nature, how make thee my own?
Where you, ye breasts? Founts of all Being, shining,
Whereon hang Heaven's and Earth's desire,
Whereto our withered hearts aspire, —
Ye flow, ye feed: and am I vainly pining?"

Faust, in accordance with his inspired mode of thought, is already very near to a recognition of the innermost connection between all existing things. Minds of deeper insight recognise themselves in all living beings. All nature with the countless number of its multiform beings is, fundamentally, only a presentation of one single Being Whom we call God. The man whose thoughts are inspired by genius, who is favoured by divine grace, finds himself again in nature, in all existing things. Nature is not something strange to him, it is rather his own domain, his own empire, it is his own self amplified:

"Spirit sublime, thou gav'st me, gav'st me all
For which I prayed. Not unto me in vain
Hast thou thy countenance revealed in fire.
Thou gav'st me Nature as a kingdom grand,
With power to feel and to enjoy it. Thou
Not only cold, amazed acquaintance yield'st,
But grantest, that in her profoundest breast
I gaze, as in the bosom of a friend.
The ranks of living creatures thou dost lead
Before me, teaching me to know my brothers
In air, and water, and the silent wood."

And just as he finds himself again in outside nature and in its creatures in many and various shapes, so also, on the other hand, he finds in his own inner self a whole world of peculiar sensations, great thoughts, and marvellous creations of the imagination:

"And when the storm in forests roars and grinds,
The giant firs, in falling, neighbour boughs
And neighbour trunks with crushing weight bear down,
And falling, fill the hills with hollow thunders, —
Then to the cave secure thou leadest me,
Then show'st me mine own self, and in my breast
The deep, mysterious miracles unfold.
And when the perfect moon before my gaze
Comes up with soothing light, around me float
From every precipice and thicket damp
The silvery phantoms of the ages past
And temper the austere delight of thought."

Faust's genius, however, manifests itself not only in his æsthetic perception and philosophic thought, but also in his creative activity, and it is, perhaps, this side of his character that presents the most interesting problem, and is most important to the essential and central idea of the poem. We have seen that the man of genius, like the child, enjoys a certain freedom of mind in his attitude towards the things of this world. The genius, like the child, only plays with things, that is, does not attach an absolute value to them which would entirely influence him in his actions. Neither to the genius nor to the child do things become idols, that is, objects of blind worship. By play we mean an activity which in itself gives pleasure, and which is, therefore, performed for its own sake, and not for the attainment of any practical aim. The more the attainment of such a practical aim is emphasised, and

the less regard is paid to the activity itself that leads to it, the more unfree will this activity be, and the greater will be the aversion combined with it. The more one looks, for instance, to the practical utility of one's labour, or to the satisfaction of one's vanity, or to any other special advantages that may be derived from one's labour, and the more this purely personal interest becomes one's chief incentive, the less interest will one feel for the work itself, and the greater will be the burden. And, on the other hand, the more entirely a piece of work is performed for its own sake, the more fully heart and soul are engaged in it, the more smoothly will it proceed, the more joyfully will each step towards greater perfection of the work be welcomed. "Pleasure and love" are called by Goethe "the wings to great actions." Now, the more a man is inspired by genius, the more keenly will he feel the need of doing whatever he does with freedom, voluntarily, with a glad heart, with entire devotion to the action itself, and without regard to any petty advantages or disadvantages that may accrue from it to himself. But every permanent possession, every precious object, is liable to become an idol, to rob the mind of its freedom, if the great value attached to the object in question excites the greed of possession, the passion to keep possession of it. Thus anxiety is created over one's money, fame, wife, child, eternal salvation, or whatever it may be. The soul is oppressed with all these cares, and the mind is then violently attracted and governed by what it considers to have an absolute worth, and in the same way the mind is repelled and powerfully affected by what it regards as absolutely injurious. Thus ruled by desire, hope, and fear, man's activity becomes entirely unfree. It is not the rational purpose of his activity, its fundamental idea which is then his chief consideration, it is

only the practical promotion of petty personal interests, the satisfaction of the desire that has been excited, or the removal of the evil that was dreaded. The lower the plane on which a man stands, the more unfree will his mode of action be; the higher it is, the more freedom and rationality will lie at the root of all he does. Should the man of genius follow the example of other men and place an absolute value on the things of this world, he will, in so doing, feel the want of freedom so strongly, that he will forcibly discard all ties in order to be able to follow out unhindered his own line of action. The man of genius cannot take the things of this world seriously, in the sense of placing an absolute value on them. When he attempts to do so, his action becomes unfree and will be combined with aversion, and this aversion will become so great that he would rather perish than remain in such a condition. Something like this is meant by Faust, when he curses everything that exerts any sort of influence on man and determines him in his actions. He had already done with life. Unsatisfied with this present existence, he turns, of his own free choice, to a better future:

"Out on the open ocean speeds my dreaming;
The glassy flood before my feet is gleaming,
A new day beckons to a newer shore!"

He has already lifted the cup of poison to his lips, when the sound of bells and the Easter song are heard. These sounds that had so deeply affected him in his far distant childhood, exert their power over him even now and determine his action. The poison is left untouched:

"What hollow humming, what a sharp, clear stroke,
Drives from my lips the goblet, at their meeting?

Announce the booming bells already woke
The first glad hour of Easter's festal greeting?
Ye choirs, have ye begun the sweet, consoling chant,
Which, through the night of Death, the angels ministrant
Sang, God's new Covenant repeating? . . . .
Why, here in dust, entice me with your spell,
Ye gentle, powerful sounds of Heaven?
Peal rather there, where tender natures dwell.
Your messages I hear, buth faith has not been given;
The dearest child of Faith is Miracle.
I venture not to soar to yonder regions
Whence the glad tidings hither float;
And yet, from childhood up familiar with the note,
To Life it now renews the old allegiance.
Once Heavenly Love sent down a burning kiss
Upon my brow, in Sabbath silence holy;
And, filled with mystic presage, chimed the church-bell slowly
And prayer dissolved me in a fervent bliss.
A sweet, uncomprehended yearning
Drove forth my feet through woods and meadows free,
And while a thousand tears were burning,
I felt a world arise for me.
These chants, to youth, and all its sports appealing,
Proclaimed the Spring's rejoicing holiday:
And Memory holds me now, with childish feeling,
Back from the last, the solemn way.
Sound on, ye hymns of Heaven, so sweet and mild!
My tears gush forth: the Earth takes back her child!"

Afterwards, when Mephistopheles reminds him of this, Faust curses all that may exert any power over the soul and gain a determinating influence on man's own original decision:

"Though some familiar tone, retrieving
My thoughts from torment, led me on,
And sweet, clear echoes came, deceiving
A faith bequeathed from Childhood's dawn,
Yet now I curse whate'er entices
And snares the soul with visions vain;
With dazzling cheats and dear devices
Confines it in this cave of pain!
Cursed be, at once, the high ambition
Wherewith the mind itself deludes!
Cursed be the glare of apparition
That on the finer sense intrudes!
Cursed be the lying dream's impression
Of name, and fame, and laurelled brow!
Cursed, all that flatters as possession,
As wife and child, as knave and plough!
Cursed Mammon be, when he with treasures
To restless action spurs our fate!
Cursed when, for soft, indulgent leisures,
He lays for us the pillows straight!
Cursed be the vine's transcendent nectar, —
The highest favour Love lets fall!
Cursed, also, Hope! — cursed Faith, the spectre!
And cursed be Patience most of all!"

The sense of this curse is that all the goods of life turn to evils, whenever they rob the soul of its free resolve and of its own determination. Spinoza says: "The good which hinders us from enjoying a greater good is really an evil."[1] The greater good for Faust, however, in this special case, was in his opinion death:

[1] *Ethic.* Translated by W. H. White; translation revised by A. H. Stirling. 4th edition, 1910, p. 233.

"O fortunate, for whom, when victory glances,
The bloody laurels on the brow he bindeth!
Whom, after rapid, maddening dances,
In clasping maiden-arms he findeth!
O would that I, before that spirit-power,
Ravished and rapt from life, had sunken!"

The remembrance of the things that so deeply moved him as a child and youth, had prevented him from carrying out his suicide, and therefore he curses whatever is capable of robbing the soul of its self-determination, even "the highest favour of Love." But what is it that fills him with a loathing for life and makes him esteem death as the higher good? As in the case of Hamlet, it is the contrast between the ideal and the real, the incongruity between that which the heart longs for and dreams of and that which life offers in reality. In every man, nay, it may be said in every living thing, there reveals itself a striving after the eternal, the perfect, after the highest form of existence, the highest plane of life, and at the same time after the highest bliss. Hand in hand with this goes a love for all existence, a disinterested absorption in all that enters the mind through the senses, that forms itself into thoughts and spurs to activity. In every being there is a tendency to join with all others in forming a higher and completer unity, to become engrossed in the higher existence, and to participate in the blessedness of the higher life. But this tendency acts in opposition to the natural limitations of earthly beings. One can recognise oneself only imperfectly, or not at all, in another, and therefore treats that other as something hostile, alien, remote. Thus arises a dissonance, an antagonism between the living things of this world, and instead of being engrossed in

one another to their common happiness, instead of forming out of their very multiplicity a higher unity, one being seeks to crush and destroy the existence of the other. In the child and the adolescent the better impulses still predominate, hence the enthusiasm of the young man and woman, hence the happiness of youth and the bliss of the childish heart. But the world makes its claims, hard necessity asserts itself; the evil example of others is contagious; what is base and selfish in human nature is pampered and nursed, what is noble is mocked at, ridiculed, and forced back into the inmost recesses of the heart; good intentions are misunderstood. Thus the impulse towards the perfect, the good, the true, and the beautiful soon becomes stunted. Desire, hope, and fear obtain sway over the soul, the pinions on which it might have soared into a higher existence are plucked out, and nothing is left but a loathsome worm.[1]

Now, the more strongly the divine impulse, divine love operates in a man, that is, the more he is inspired

[1] Cp. Wordsworth, *Poems*, chosen and edited by Matthew Arnold, 1906, p. 203:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the East
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

by genius, the more painfully will he feel that degradation of his originally better nature which has been caused by the contaminating, poisonous, destructive contact with the world and its countless diseased, crippled, and worm-like souls. Goethe even in his old age, though he was then sufficiently familiar with the world, states that he could produce good work only in the early morning, because then he still felt fresh, and his equanimity was not yet disturbed by the stupid and grotesque incidents of daily life. Should the man of genius find himself unable to overcome this soul-deadening influence and to rise above it to entire freedom of personal conduct, he will take refuge in death, as the only relief from this unbearable mental discord. Faust conjures up the Earth-Spirit. Like him he wishes to take an active part in the life of all humanity, like him he desires with divine love to perform deeds which should have an importance for all humanity. But he shrinks in terror from the magnitude of the task, he is discouraged by the enmity and resistance with which the chosen path bristles. When the Earth-Spirit appears, Faust averts his face and exclaims: "Terrible to see!"

"*Spirit.*
Me hast thou long with might attracted,
Long from my sphere thy food exacted,
And now —
Faust.
Woe! I endure not thee!
Spirit.
In the tides of Life, in Action's storm,
A fluctuant wave,
A shuttle free,
Birth and the Grave,

An eternal sea,
A weaving, flowing
Life, all-glowing,
Thus at Time's humming loom 'tis my hand prepares
The garment of Life which the Deity wears!

Faust.

Thou, who around the wide world wendest,
Thou busy Spirit, how near I feel to thee!

Spirit.

Thou'rt like the Spirit which thou comprehendest,
Not me!"

The originally divine element in Faust is obscured by human weakness, uncertainty, and care. The godlike thoughts by which his mind is directed towards the eternal are dulled and made inoperative by the motley and superficial multiplicity of life with all its petty, selfish interests. Every earthly acquisition we make, each selfish interest that occupies us, more and more obscures the *better*, the divine element in us, that which is eternal in us, till it comes to appear a mere illusion. That feeling of love on which all life is based, becomes more and more stifled by feelings of selfishness and hatred:

"Some alien substance more and more is cleaving
To all the mind conceives of grand and fair;
When *this world's Good* is won by our achieving,
The *Better*, then, is named a cheat and snare.
The fine emotions, whence our lives we mould,
Lie in the earthly tumult dumb and cold."

The smaller a man grows, the more the well-springs of his individual nature are dammed up and his mind is warped, the more anxiously will he cleave to life and all the goods of life. Mirth and freedom from care,

happiness and bliss are enthroned on the brow of a God; care, anxiety, and worry about all sorts of things, about life and property, about wife and child, are the inheritance of weak man, who is trodden in the dust by fate, as the worm by the foot of the wanderer:

"If hopeful Fancy once, in daring flight,
Her longings to the *Infinite* expanded,
Yet now a narrow space contents her quite,
Since Time's wild wave so many a fortune stranded.
Care at the bottom of the heart is lurking:
Her secret pangs in silence working,
She, restless, rocks herself, disturbing joy and rest:
In newer *masks* her face is ever drest,
By turns as house and land, as wife and child, presented, —
As water, fire, as poison, steel:
We dread the blows we never feel,
And what we never lose is yet by us lamented!
I am not like the Gods! That truth is felt too deep:
The worm am I, that in the dust doth creep, —
That, while in dust it lives and seeks its bread,
Is crushed and buried by the wanderer's tread."

To know *care*, to make acquaintance with *hope* and *fear*, to sweat and toil after one possession or another, to fly before this or that evil, this is "Man's uncertain fate." Man must "daily conquer his freedom and existence anew," and at the same time he is constantly the slave of idols, of the phantasms of life, of the luring and deterring *masks* that *care* puts on, and which overpower him so entirely, that he loses more or less completely the true enjoyment of life which has its basis in the inner freedom of his personality. Not till Faust has attained to a great age, and approaching dissolution has deprived him of the deep insight of genius, does he look upon the wretched

daily struggle for the necessaries of life as the object most worthy to be pursued:

"The last result of wisdom stamps it true:
He only earns his freedom and existence,
Who daily conquers them anew."

While still possessing the deep insight of genius, and still striving with all his heart and soul after the eternal, Faust feels himself unable to lead so wretched a life, and hence he desires to die, to free himself from the narrowness and torment of earthly existence. What restrains him from taking the final, irrevocable step, is the memory of the joyous time of youth, a remnant of that earnest childlike piety and that rapturous divine love which seeks after perfection, light, and life, and not after death, night, and horror:

"Sound on, ye hymns of Heaven, so sweet and mild!
My tears gush forth: the Earth takes back her child!"

Faust has been won back to life, but to a life full of unrest and unsatisfied yearning. To toil along the path that finally leads to the divinity, to saturate his heart with eternal love, that he may at last attain peace, is beyond his power, for this he feels himself too weak:

"I venture not to soar to yonder regions
Whence the glad tidings hither float."

But on the other hand he is too great, too free in soul, too much a superman, a man of genius, to become entirely absorbed in earthly occupations, and to take pleasure in petty things, in honorary titles and external triumphs. Thus nothing is left for him but to dull his senses, to grasp at all things only to drop them again, to enjoy, to dare, to be active, with the sole object of drowning the

voice of yearning in his heart, the longing for an infinitely perfect and blissful existence. Therefore he says to Wagner:

"One impulse art thou conscious of, at best;
O, never seek to know the other!
Two souls, alas! reside within my breast,
And each withdraws from, and repels, its brother.
One with tenacious organs holds in love
And clinging lust the world in its embraces;
The other strongly sweeps, this dust above,
Into the high ancestral spaces."

It is this unsatisfied longing for what is eternal and divine that causes him to enter, without hesitation, into the pact with the devil, for he has a heartfelt conviction that, with all his human weakness, he will never sink so low as to be entirely obsessed by any good thing this world can offer him, as completely to lose his freedom of soul and to become base, ruled only by fear and lust, the sport and prey of the devil:

"*Faust.*
When on an idler's bed I stretch myself in quiet,
There let, at once, my record end!
Canst thou with lying flattery rule me,
Until, self-pleased, myself I see, —
Canst thou with rich enjoyment fool me,
Let that day be the last for me!
The bet I offer.

Mephistopheles.
Done!

Faust.
And heartily!
When thus I hail the Moment flying:
'Ah, still delay — thou art so fair!'

Then bind me in thy bonds undying,
My final ruin then declare!
Then let the death-bell chime the token,
Then art thou from thy service free!
The clock may stop, the hand be broken,
Then Time be finished unto me!"

Mephistopheles finally wins the wager, but not until the feelings of the man of genius in Faust have been destroyed by approaching dissolution, not until Care, the sister of Death, the attendant on this dissolution, has struck the superman not only with physical, but what is here of primary importance, with mental blindness, and thereby degraded him to the position of an ordinary mortal. That Faust's physical blindness is in reality only the outward, symbolical manifestation of his mental blindness, appears from the words of Care:

"Throughout their whole existence men are blind;
So, Faust, be thou like them at last!"

Men are blind all their lives because the cares of their petty, frail existence make them lose sight of the reality, greatness, and wholeness of life. Too anxious a care binds them to the goods of this life and actuates them to flee from its evils, and thus, oscillating between hope and fear, their inner freedom and independence, their original, divine nature cannot force its way through: they become a prey to the Evil One, that is to say, instead of attaining to the highest inner, independent existence, they are subjugated by the misery of life and perish in it:

"*Care* at the bottom of the heart is lurking:
Her secret pangs in silence working,
She, restless, rocks herself, disturbing joy and rest:

In newer masks her face is ever drest,
By turns as house and land, as wife and child, presented, —
As water, fire, as poison, steel:
We dread the blows we never feel,
And what we never lose is yet by us lamented!"

Care makes us blind: she causes us to dread the blows which will never hit us, to be consumed in constant anxiety, and to lament what we shall never lose. Care robs man of pure enjoyment, of the true value and import of life, kills him while he is still alive, and makes him blind while his eyes yet see, she robs him of his inner divine repose and freedom, makes him base and common, and, at last, "for Hell prepares him:"

"*Care.*
Whom I once possess, shall never
Find the world worth his endeavour:
Endless gloom around him folding,
Rise nor set of sun beholding,
Perfect in external senses,
Inwardly his darkness dense is;
And he knows not how to measure
True possession of his treasure.
Luck and Ill become caprices;
Still he starves in all increases;
Be it happiness or sorrow,
He postpones it till the morrow;
To the Future only cleaveth:
Nothing, therefore, he achieveth . . . .
Shall he go, or come? — how guide him?
Prompt decision is denied him;
Midway on the trodden highway
Halting, he attempts a by-way;

Ever more astray, bemisted,
Everything beholding twisted,
Burdening himself and others,
Taking breath, he chokes and smothers,
Though not choked, in Life not sharing,
Not resigned, and not despairing!
Such incessant rolling, spinning, —
Painful quitting, hard beginning, —
Now constraint, now liberation, —
Semi-sleep, poor recreation,
Firmly in his place insnare him
And, at last, for Hell prepare him!"

A totally different attitude towards surrounding objects is that of the *seeing* man, of the man of genius. He has turned his back upon care for ever, since he no longer takes the things of this world seriously. He inwardly detaches himself from them, however much he may outwardly remain dependent upon them. But this inner repose and tranquillity lend to the vision of the man of genius that impartiality and penetrating keenness, and, since in reality he neither fears nor hopes for anything seriously, they give to his actions that impetus, that boldness and irresistible power which appear so marvellous to the man of petty interests, who is burdened by anxious care for a thousand different things. "There was an eye to *see* in this man," says Carlyle of Napoleon. How can the seeing man, the man of genius, who is filled with the deep longing and the most fervent love for the highest, most durable, and most perfect existence, — how can such a man become engrossed by care for the base, imperfect, most insecure, and transient things of this world, exposed as they are to every conceivable peril and accident? "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for

the body, what ye shall put on." Imperfect and insecure is everything here on earth. From the very first the man of genius recognises that, for the success of his endeavours, he is constantly dependent on accidental, outward conditions that are at no time under his complete control. "I am only the creature of time and circumstance," said Napoleon of himself. The most glowing enthusiasm, the strongest resolution, the intensest longing can accomplish nothing without the favour of outward circumstances, without the aid of external means. Accordingly Faust says:

> "The God that in my breast is owned
> Can deeply stir the inner sources;
> The God, above my powers enthroned,
> He cannot change external forces."

External means depend on accidental circumstances, not on the individual will. Hence the wishes, intentions, and aims of men are usually in more or less direct contrast to these external means. The consequence is that in the man of genius, in whom the highest aims, firmest will, keenest struggle for freedom, and most strongly developed creative impulse are found, the breach between will and accomplishment, between the ideal and the real is also most sharply defined, and this again leads to the result that the man of genius, on principle, completely abandons all effort to adapt the reality to his ideal, to make his will prevail in every case, and to shape life entirely according to his own desires. He, therefore, does not take the world in earnest, like ordinary mortals, who are seriously anxious about all kinds of things, and wish at any cost to obtain one thing and to avoid another. The man of genius, on the contrary, rises superior to things. Faust says:

"What not sufficed me, forth I let it fare,
And what escaped me, I let go."

And instead of being affected by any serious care about them, he looks upon life rather as a field for the free employment of his powers, setting himself the most exalted aims solely of his own choosing, and, as it were, in play or in sport, striving with all his might after the attainment of these aims, yet without allowing his inner worth, his inner life to be affected by the actual attainment of any aim which is liable to be influenced by outward, and therefore partly unforeseen, circumstances:

"I've only craved, accomplished my delight,
Then wished a second time, and thus with might
Stormed through my life."

Thus, for instance, Faust is stirred to engage in the struggle with the elements, with the mighty ocean, to wrest from it whole territories:

"Then dared my mind its dreams to over-soar:
Here would I fight, — subdue this fierce uproar!"

The whole is a game, a kind of sport on a large scale, and no serious care as to the final issue of the grand struggle troubles the hero's mind. Afterwards, to the question of Care:

"Hast thou not Care already known?"

Faust answers:

"I only through the world have flown;"

that is, he has never inwardly, with anxious care, attached himself to anything, he has never stuck fast in the quicksands of life, but rather "stormed through" his life.

"Thus let him
In marching onwards, bliss and torment find,
Though, every moment, with unsated mind!"

This was the superman, unsubdued, unconsciously turning his face towards the eternal, and therefore never bound to the earthly and finite, ever striving and active, who with perfect tranquillity and certainty could make the wager with Mephistopheles, because he was inwardly convinced that nothing here on earth could entirely satisfy his soul, or permanently fetter him:

"When on an idler's bed I stretch myself in quiet,
There let, at once, my record end!"

The man of godlike feeling cannot be absolutely satisfied with any of the good things of this world however great, noble, and glorious they may be; he is incapable of finding an idol, or illusion, or obsession among them. Faust's idea of wresting from the ocean's waste wide and fertile territories on which a whole nation of many millions might lead a happy and active existence, in spite of the nobility and grandeur of the conception, has for this still unsubdued man of genius merely the significance of an aim for his powerful active impulse, is for him only a sport. To this aim he devotes himself with all his energy, it is true, yet only regarding it as a game and as an outlet for his creative instincts:

"This sphere of earthly soil
Still gives us room for lofty doing.
Astounding plans e'en now are brewing:
I feel new strength for bolder toil."

But he in no way makes the estimate of his own worth dependent on the success or failure of his work, nor does he attach any importance to the judgment of contemporaries or of posterity:

"The Deed is everything, the Glory naught."

The utmost weakness of old age — Faust in the fifth Act appears "walking about, in extreme old age," and was according to Goethe's intention "exactly a hundred years old" — this extreme old age and approaching dissolution bring about what his whole life, with all its perplexities, struggles, sorrows, and joys, had failed to accomplish: the dying man is seized with care about the ultimate success of his work, he can now conceive of nothing higher than its completion. His mind, though still great enough to take pleasure in a mighty undertaking which will give millions of people sustenance and habitation, is, nevertheless, so far dimmed and obscured by the infirmities of old age, as to have entirely lost the direct and deep feeling for the highest perfection, for the eternal good. Formerly this longing, a longing for a complete and eternal existence, felt without his being clearly conscious of it, prevented him from finding contentment in a base existence, and left him, all through life, "every moment, with unsated mind." But now, with the loss of this longing for the eternal, a finite possession has power to become an idol to him, to occupy his soul, and to blind him so far as to make him believe that he may find the highest possible satisfaction in this earthly possession. Not till Care approaches him, does the loss of his free and inspired attitude of soul towards all temporary things begin to show itself; up to his conversation with Care he still believes that he can struggle against her deadly influence, and he closes defiantly with the words,

> "And yet, O Care, thy power, thy creeping shape,
> Think not that I shall recognise it."

But Care says,

> "So feel it now: my curse thou'lt find,
> When forth from thee I've swiftly passed!

Throughout their whole existence men are blind,
So, Faust, be thou like them *at last!*"

Breathing in his face she turns him blind, that is, by taking possession of him, she makes of him an ordinary, everyday mortal, deprives him of his tranquil, free, inspired attitude towards the world, and at the same time deprives him of the unbiassed, all-penetrating perception of the man of genius. Now he is blind to what is eternal as well as to the true nature of finite things, and now he falls a prey to what is finite by making an idol of it, a prey to the nothingness of the finite the symbolic embodiment of which is Mephistopheles.

There is a very remarkable contrast between the mental blindness produced by the breath of Care and the conviction of the senile, dying Faust that he now carries all knowledge within himself, and no longer requires any outward light to find the right way:

"The Night seems deeper now to press around me,
But in my inmost spirit all is light."

These verses have hitherto greatly contributed to confuse the commentators. Goethe has here, with subtle irony, indicated the well-known peculiarity of all mentally blind people, of considering themselves exceedingly wise, and of being convinced that they can develop everything from their "inmost spirit." Goethe himself said to Eckermann: "Even the greatest genius would not accomplish much, if he desired to owe everything to his own inner self." But the mentally blind man does not require any outward light, he does not need to *see* things and to observe facts keenly in order to obtain guidance for his actions, for he believes he knows from the very outset, without experience, exactly how everything will

turn out and what he will have to do in order to insure the success of his efforts.

"Throughout their whole existence men are blind."

Even when in actual contact with things, they do not recognise them, but explain them invariably by the "light" in their "inmost spirits," that is, from the point of view of their own personal limitations. In this sense Goethe has always understood "seeing" symbolically: "Because your eyes are open, you think you see;" and further: "The senses are not deceptive, but the judgment is." It is the petty care for personal concerns that causes this disturbance of the judgment: "Perfect in external senses, inwardly his darkness is dense," are the words that Care sings into Faust's ear. His blindness is therefore to be understood symbolically. Extreme old age often darkens not only the outer sense, but also the inner one. Not only the body is subject to decay, but we sometimes see even the most exalted mind sink into the gloom of insanity or at least lose the soaring strength of genius. One of the thousand ills which may lead, if not immediately to death or insanity, yet to physical and mental decay, is old age. But among the characteristics of senile decay must also be reckoned the ease with which *care* masters an old man as compared with a man in the vigour of youth. Faust also pays tribute to human weakness, although not until he has become a "centenarian," "walking about in extreme old age," nay, a dying man; for Mephistopheles has already ordered his grave to be dug.

In "*Sulpice Boisserée*" (vol. I, p. 286) we read: "Goethe told me about his philosophical development. A philosophical mode of thought, without a real philosophical system. Spinoza was the first to exercise a great and lasting influence upon him. Then Bacon's little tractate

de Idolis; εἰδόλεις. Of Phantoms and Spectres. All error in the world arises, according to him, from such *εἰδόλεις. This view was of great assistance to Goethe, and had a special attraction for him.* He now sought for the eidolon whenever he found any incongruities, or any stubborn denial of truth by man, and he always found that there was some such 'idol' present. If anything was offensive to him, if there was any opposition to a generally accepted opinion, he at once thought to himself 'that is another one of these idols,' and troubled no further about it."

To such an idol and object of blind veneration Faust also, grown blind at last and dying, necessarily gave his heart. It was quite in accordance with the pursuits he had hitherto, in free activity, occupied himself with, that the same object should now become for him an idol, namely, that mighty undertaking by which a whole nation was to find habitation and sustenance. The object, therefore, remains one and the same; that which changes is Faust's inward attitude towards it. While Faust was still able to *see*, this object was no idol, no shadowy phantom to him, but life and reality in which, as in all life and all reality, he observed every imperfection, and which, therefore, when measured by his deep yearning for a perfect, a highest, an eternal existence, seemed to him too insignificant to afford him the fullest, highest, final satisfaction. That is why the poet says of him:

"He every moment, with unsated mind."

This failure of even the greatest earthly successes to satisfy Faust, and his keen perception of all the defects and shortcomings of finite events and earthly possessions, have been very clearly expressed by Goethe, in connection with the spirit of the whole poem, just at its very

conclusion. Faust is so little satisfied with what he has attained or can still hope to attain, that the tiny piece of land belonging to the aged couple Philemon and Baucis, is able to spoil his pleasure in his own immense estate so completely that he bursts out into the despairing words:

> "Would I were far away from here! . . .
> My realm is boundless to my vision,
> Yet at my back this vexing blot!
> The bell proclaims, with envious bluster,
> My grand estate lacks full design:
> The brown old hut, the linden-cluster,
> The crumbling chapel, are not mine."

The angry revolt of the man of genius against the barriers of the finite, the feeling of limitation imposed by time and place, as well as by the obstinate resistance of men, find further expression in the words,

> "Still that accursed *Here*!
> To me a burden most severe . . .
> The lindens, not my own possession,
> Disturb my joy in mine estate . . .
> My force of will, my potence grand,
> Is shattered here upon the sand . . .
> Their obstinate, opposing strain
> Darkens the brightest solid gain."

Nay, the very abundance of finite goods shows at the same time that true existence lies not in them, for in their very possession we perceive that something still remains to be desired, that the final longing cannot, after all, be appeased:

> "No sorer plague can us attack,
> Than rich to be, and something lack!"

For the mentally blind Faust, on the other hand, there are no limits to his power, there is no "accursed *Here.*" For the blind Faust there are no barriers to his will, from which to shrink in revolt; his will alone is sufficient to accomplish everything:

"The master's Word alone bestows the might . . .
And that the mighty work completed stands,
One mind suffices for a thousand hands."

For the blind Faust this life and its reality are perfect, and hence they become for him false gods, idols in which he believes he can find his highest satisfaction. Nor do real, actual circumstances any longer exist for the blind Faust, he no longer sees what passes around him, but lives only in his fancies. He rejoices, for instance, in the clashing of the spades, thinking that his work is approaching completion, whereas it is only the digging of his own grave that he hears. Life and reality are vanishing for him, and in their stead appears the delusion, the idol:

"The Night seems deeper now to press around me,
But in my inmost spirit all is light."

Now, blinding Care's concern is only with the false, deceptive idol, not with the eternal good about which no care need trouble us, as it remains perfect in itself. Something similar is expressed by Luther in the words: "It is in the nature of the lie to buttress itself with care and anxiety: for it is founded on itself. But Truth is assured, leaves God to govern, for it is founded on God." Thus it is Care that makes us blind, that robs us of life, that is the sister of Death:

"He cometh, our Brother! he comes, he is . . . Death!"

When we become biassed by care, lose ourselves in the finite, and are rendered dependent on the idol,

the phantom, the lie, we are led to fall a prey to the symbolic representative of deception and falsehood, a prey to the symbolic representative of nothingness, to Mephistopheles, to the father of lies to whom all life is hateful:

> "I am the Spirit that Denies!
> And justly so: for all things, from the Void
> Called forth, deserve to be destroyed.
> 'Twere better, then, were naught created.
> Thus, all which you as Sin have rated, —
> Destruction, — aught with Evil blent, —
> That is my proper element."

In contrast to *Care* that makes men blind, we find clear-sightedness produced by *Magic*, by which Goethe symbolised *Genius*, as has been pointed out above. When Care has already found entrance "through the keyhole," and the other three Gray Women announce the near approach of Death, Faust begins to feel the "magic gift of genius" to be a burden and, mistaking his whole mental development, desires to become an ordinary mortal who faces reality without any deeper knowledge of things. Herewith is indicated, in the most subtle manner, the transition to the total loss of the "magic gift of genius" and, at the same time, to Faust's mental blindness under the breath of Care. She has but just approached him, and although she has not yet fully taken possession of him, her influence is already perceptible in Faust's desire to throw away exactly that which places him on the highest eminence, to throw away the "magic gift of genius," a thing totally incompatible with Care. Under the increasing influence of Care, Faust now believes that he will be able to find true freedom in the very agency that was bound to make him entirely unfree, namely, in the ordinary,

earthly, and subjectively limited way of looking at things, common to the vast majority of men:

"Not yet have I my liberty made good:
If I could banish Magic's fell creations,
And totally unlearn the incantations, —
Stood I, O Nature! Man alone in thee,
Then were it worth one's while a man to be!"

He believes he will thus be able to return to the starting-point, without realising that he never was an ordinary man, that, on the contrary, when he "cursed himself and the world," he was moved by an enthusiasm and boundless devotion of the heart, that pointed beyond itself and the world to the object of his deepest longing, of which he himself had, nevertheless, not yet become fully conscious.

The transition from the freedom of genius to the bondage of the ordinary care-ridden man is further shown by the fact that Faust refrains from uttering any "word of sorcery" against Care, that is, from making use of his "magic gift," of his inspired sense of penetration and the inspired productive power based thereon, in order to exorcise Care:

"*Faust.*

Avaunt!

Care.

I am where I should be.

Faust.

(first angry, then composed, speaking to himself)

Beware, and speak no word of sorcery!"

It is true that at the question, "Hast thou not Care already known?" he casts a backward glance at the life that he has stormed through under the impelling power of genius:

"I only through the world have flown."

It is true he thinks that, even without the magic word being spoken, that is, even without making use of the power of genius, he cannot be harmed by Care:

"Desist! So shalt thou not get hold of me!"

It is true he can still plainly see how the "spectres," the idols that Boisserée speaks of, corrupt man's life:

"Ill-omened spectres! By your treatment strays
A thousand times the human race to error:
Ye even transform the dull, indifferent days
To vile confusion of entangling terror."

It is true he still persists in his belief that he can resist Care: — suddenly she breathes upon him and, at the very close of his life, she makes him as blind as ordinary men are throughout their lives:

"Throughout their whole existence men are blind:
So Faust, be thou like them at last!"

Once Care has breathed upon him, Faust is strangely altered. We no longer hear from him the slightest reference to his conversation with Care, but see him suddenly possessed by a great haste and unrest:

"I rest not till the finished work hath crowned me."

Every man must be set to work on the spot, in the middle of the night, so that he may at once bring to completion that which occupies him so entirely as to rob him of the power of impartially estimating the possible, the attainable, and the real:

"Up from your couches, vassals, man by man!
Make grandly visible my daring plan!
Seize now your tools, with spade and shovel press!
The work traced out must be a swift success."

It is the foolish haste of the subjectively biassed man, one-sidedly engrossed in the object before him, which now urges him on. He is entirely filled with the vain thought of erecting to himself by this gigantic work a monument which shall stand for "æons," whereas formerly his motto was: "The Deed is everything, the Glory naught," and now "the last result of wisdom" is for him contained in the daily struggle for freedom and life. Entirely given up to this narrow earthly view, and quite in the manner of ordinary people, he takes the wholly uncertain future for a certainty, remote possibility for palpable reality, the mere scheme of a great work for the work itself, mere intention for execution, and so finds the highest satisfaction in a pure phantasm, in the mere idea of the glorious accomplishment of his work:

> "Then dared I hail the Moment fleeing:
> 'Ah, still delay — thou art so fair!'
> The traces cannot, of mine earthly being,
> In æons perish — they are there! —
> In proud fore-feeling of such lofty bliss,
> I now enjoy the highest Moment — this!"

Thus Faust has lost the wager, but — and this is decisive from a just point of view — in a condition of incipient dissolution, in a state of moral irresponsibility. With consciousness and a sound moral sense Faust could never have believed that he would ever be able to find his final supreme satisfaction in the success of any outward activity however great or noble. What conquers the man of genius is the weakness of old age, senility, dissolution.

> "Me he resisted in such vigorous wise,
> But *Time* is lord, on earth the *old man* lies,"

says Mephistopheles significantly enough. And because it was only the weakness of old age that, in the

course of Time, made Faust irresponsible and unfaithful to his own nature, the loss of the wager is of no further importance. Up to the moment of incipient dissolution when Care, the precursor and sister of Death, breathed upon him, Faust had, all through life, in the depths of his soul, been intent on the divine, the eternal, and the perfect, without confessing it to himself. It was his ardent longing for the highest perfection, freedom, and happiness that prevented him from finding final satisfaction in any earthly course of action, in any temporal work depending on outward, accidental factors. Thus he "aspires unweariedly" without allowing his soul to be bound down by any finite thing. The highest love, eternal love, dwelt in his heart, unknown to himself, even denied by himself, manifested only in the fact that he could not be engrossed by any of the world's fleeting possessions and pleasures. What he loved in earthly things was not these things themselves, but that eternal element which found expression in them. In a Gretchen, as a beloved woman, in a Helen, as a symbol of the highest art, in a nation, as an object for his creative activity, in all these he ever loved only that which pointed beyond them, namely, the Divinity which reveals itself in all that exists. So Gretchen also, that grand and noble mind, loved in Faust not only the man, but the ideal: he seemed to her the embodiment of all that is highest. Thus the Earthly-Womanly, earthly love, has expanded to the Eternal-Womanly (*dem Ewig-Weiblichen*), to perfect love, and thus eternal love from on high takes part in him, works his salvation, and receives him into its realms of bliss:

"The noble Spirit now is free,
And saved from evil scheming:
Whoe'er aspires unweariedly
Is not beyond redeeming.

And if he feels the grace of Love
That from On High is given,
The Blessed Hosts that wait above,
Shall welcome him to Heaven!"

Here on earth there is no perfection, but only an impulse towards it. In all beings this impulse is expressed in their desire to live, in their striving after ever higher forms of existence. The apparent perfections of "all transitory things" that attract us, that fill us with rapture, and kindle our love, "are sent but as symbols," as symbols of what is imperishable, of what is truly perfect, of the highest, the true existence. In God alone "earth's insufficiency," the seemingly perfect, becomes truly perfect and so "grows to Event."

Woman with her closer relation to nature, in contrast to man who is more filled with spiritual aspiration, is taken, generally, as the symbol of the creature-like, the finite, and the insufficient. But in the finite, the creature-like, and the insufficient things, we progressively see revealed, more and more fully and distinctly, the infinite, the creative, and the perfect. The man of genius loves what is eternal, as it finds expression in temporal things in ever purer forms, but he does not love these things themselves. The eternal element in woman, in the finite, in the creature-like draws him upwards and on towards the eternal and the perfect in its purest form, towards the highest life and existence, towards God:

"All things transitory
But as symbols are sent:
Earth's insufficiency
Here grows to Event:
The Indescribable,
Here it is done:

The Eternal-Womanly bears us
Upward and on!"

NOTE.

The preceding exposition is made in connection with the remarks in my short essay on "*Das Wesen des Genies*" (The Nature of Genius), published in 1888. As I arrived at my explanation of the Hamlet tragedy through pondering on the words of Christ concerning His mother and brethren, so again I was led by my study of Hamlet to the fundamental idea in Goethe's "Faust." While I was attempting, as an introduction to a commentary on "Hamlet," to define the essential features of genius in general, numerous passages in "Faust" suddenly occurred to me which I had never understood before, and which now, in connection with my idea of genius, at once became quite clear and intelligible. A subsequent examination of many different interpretations of "Faust" — here may be mentioned only those of Hartung, Düntzer, Köstlin, Vischer, Kreyssig, Carriere, Löper, von Öttingen, Boyesen, Marbach, Schreyer, Grimm, Fischer, Baumgart, Valentin, Meyer, Heinemann, Schröer, Freybe, Keuchel, Geist, and Minor — showed me that all of them had failed to do justice to the fundamental idea of the poem, because they had overlooked the essential element of genius in Faust, which in spite of all outward dependence on mundane forces rests on his inner detachment from all that is finite. Consequently, the scene in which Care appears and which is of the greatest significance for a comprehension of the whole, has been completely misunderstood by all of them. In fact only very few have noticed the change that has taken place in Faust, after

Care has breathed upon him; and none of the commentators has interpreted this change in the right way, and drawn from it the conclusions that are so important for the idea of the whole work. Later, in "Eckermann's Conversations with Goethe," and in "Goethe's Colloquies with Chancellor von Müller," etc., I found a great many proofs of the correctness of my conception, and these I have set forth in an essay on "*Die Bedeutung der Magie und Sorge in Goethe's 'Faust,'*" in *Goethe-Jahrbuch* for 1900, as well as in a separate essay, "*Eine neue Faust-Erklärung*," fifth, enlarged edition, 1911.

VI.

BYRON'S DELINEATION OF THE SUPERMAN IN MANFRED

MANFRED was produced under the twofold influence of the majestic scenery of the Alps and of Goethe's "Faust." The third Act, besides, shows the impression made on Byron by Rome on his first visit to the Eternal City. During his journey in Switzerland in the year 1816, fragments of the first Part of Goethe's "Faust" were translated for him by a friend and must have produced a very profound impression on him. The Faust-like element in Byron's nature was undoubtedly powerfully stirred, and thus the impulse awakened to give independent and personal utterance to what had already been expressed for him, as it were, by another. The impression made on Byron by these fragments of "Faust" was a deeper one than he himself was afterwards willing to confess to, and was still further strengthened by the influence of the glorious Alpine scenery on his enthusiastically disposed mind. This twofold impression is plainly reflected in his dramatic poem "Manfred," Byron's highest and grandest work. In "Manfred" just as in Goethe's "Faust" and in the scenery of the Alps we find soft charm, beauty, and loveliness side by side with awful sublimity and grandeur. Manfred, like Faust and Hamlet, is the man of genius, the superman, whose enraptured eye takes in all the beau-

ty of the world, and whose yearning for the highest, the perfect existence, for a divine life, is, nevertheless, so great that all the pleasures which this world can offer are incapable of filling his heart. But, like Faust, Manfred finds it impossible to attain perfect peace and wholly to merge himself in the divine. The earth with her powerful attraction fetters him and draws him down again as often as his soul, eagle-like, strives to soar towards heaven. But the boundless yearning in his heart for the perfect and the eternal preserves him from becoming base and completely absorbed in earthly vanity and nothingness, from becoming the sport and prey of the Evil One.

Thus through his æsthetic perception, through his fine feeling for the beautiful, there runs a vein of profound melancholy. The world that appears so glorious and sublime to him, is at the same time the scene of his sufferings and struggles. Standing on one of the highest summits of the Alps, and gazing with rapture on the marvellous prospect, Manfred exclaims,

"My mother Earth!
And thou fresh breaking Day, and you, ye Mountains,
Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,
That openest over all, and unto all
Art a delight — thou shin'st not on my heart.
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge
I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs
In dizziness of distance; when a leap,
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed
To rest for ever — wherefore do I pause?

I feel the impulse — yet I do not plunge;
I see the peril — yet do not recede;
And my brain reels — and yet my foot is firm:
There is a power upon me which withholds,
And makes it my fatality to live,
If it be life to wear within myself
This barrenness of spirit, and to be
My own soul's sepulchre, for I have ceased
To justify my deeds unto myself —
The last infirmity of evil. Ay,
Thou wingéd and cloud-cleaving minister
[An eagle passes.
Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,
Well may'st thou swoop so near me — I should be
Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou art gone
Where the eye cannot follow thee; but thine
Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,
With a pervading vision. — Beautiful!
How beautiful is all this visible world!
How glorious in its action and itself!
But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence, make
A conflict of its elements, and breathe
The breath of degradation and of pride,
Contending with low wants and lofty will,
Till our mortality predominates,
And men are — what they name not to themselves,
And trust not to each other. Hark! the note,
[The Shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard.
The natural music of the mountain reed —
For here the patriarchal days are not
A pastoral fable — pipes in the liberal air,
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;
My soul would drink those echoes. Oh that I were

The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
A living voice, a breathing harmony,
A bodiless enjoyment — born and dying
With the blest tone which made me!"

These words plainly show how intensely the beauty of the world was felt by Manfred, how strongly his feeling for the perfection of outward appearance was developed, how deeply his mode of looking on things was inspired by genius, in analogy with the æsthetic perceptions of Faust who, during his walk with Wagner, gives such highly poetical expression to his admiration of the setting sun. Hamlet's words in painting the splendour of the world to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern bear the same character; he speaks of "this most excellent canopy, the air, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire."

An intense feeling for the beauty of nature, however, includes a profound sorrow for the imperfection and frailty of human nature. The very appreciation of divine beauty, of the perfection of outside appearance, awakens a longing for inner perfection, for the perfection of thought and desire, that is, for the highest development of one's whole existence, for the highest life. In contrast with the longed-for ideal, the imperfection of reality exerts a doubly painful influence on the mind. Hence it is that the enjoyment called forth by the contemplation of great beauty is so often accompanied by sorrow, the feeling of a hidden want. The happiness and rapture with which the sight of a fair object fills us, then combine with this sorrow to form the feeling which we call melancholy. Great beauty produces in us a sense of joy and of sorrow simultaneously, and a Venus of Milo, or a violin concerto of Beethoven, will occasionally touch

us so deeply that we cannot refrain from tears. We are all of us, more or less, Fausts, Manfreds, and Hamlets; in all of us is present, more or less consciously, a reaching out towards that which is perfect, a yearning for the highest form of existence, and when we see or hear anything perfect or beautiful, this longing swells so as to arrest the beating of our hearts, and brings tears to our eyes. Once when Heinrich Heine went out for the first time after a long illness and entered the Louvre, he broke down sobbing before the statue of the Venus of Milo. The words of Narcissus in Brachvogel's Drama of the same name have always peculiarly touched me: "O Yearning, Yearning, it is thou that holdest the universe together, thou art indeed the best part of life. Ah, he who is no longer capable of Yearning is fit for death, fit for the corruption of the grave!" Aristotle made a similar remark more than two thousand years ago: "All men of genius are said to have suffered from melancholy." But melancholy is the expression of a profound and unsatisfied yearning.

This discord between the longing for a more perfect existence and one's own imperfection, specially realised at the sight of some beautiful and sublime creation, causes Manfred to combine with his admiration of the glorious world the expression of his deep sorrow at his own imperfection: — "How beautiful is all this visible world! How glorious in its action and itself! But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we, half dust, half deity, alike unfit to sink or soar, with our mix'd essence, make a conflict of its elements, and breathe the breath of degradation and of pride, contending with low wants and lofty will, till our mortality predominates, and men are — what they name not to themselves, and trust not to each other."

We know that Hamlet, the man of genius, actually possesses this courage of truthfulness, he does "name" to himself what Manfred here hints at, and "trusts" it also to others: "I am myself indifferent honest," he says to Ophelia, "but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us."

It is this discord in human nature, that Faust also emphasises, shortly after having expressed in such beautiful words of admiration the æsthetic feelings aroused in him by the setting of the sun:

"One impulse art thou conscious of, at best;
O, never seek to know the other!
Two souls, alas! reside within my breast,
And each withdraws from, and repels, its brother.
One with tenacious organs holds in love
And clinging lust the world in its embraces;
The other strongly sweeps, this dust above,
Into the high ancestral spaces."

This mixture of admiration and contempt for human nature finds expression in Hamlet's words, "What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?"

Only occasionally does purely æsthetic sensation free itself from all admixture, in calm and peaceful moments, when a man has ceased to seek after the true reality in finite

things and has done with his desires and hopes and with his life. Manfred, like Faust, had attempted to destroy himself; on the point of hurling himself over the precipice, he was, at the last moment, saved by a chamois hunter and led back to life. Death's near presence had produced a tranquillising effect on his mind. The conflict in his heart makes itself less keenly felt. Beauty now delights him, without at the same time causing deep mental pain. Manfred seeks to make this pure delight in the beautiful, this pure enjoyment in contemplation, his own, for a time, by conjuring the fair Witch of the Alps to appear before him; at the sight of a waterfall in a deep Alpine valley he utters the words,

"It is not noon — the sunbow's rays still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
And roll the sheeted silver's waving column
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,
And fling its lines of foaming light along,
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death,
As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes
But mine now drink this sight of loveliness;
I should be sole in this sweet solitude,
And with the Spirit of the place divide
The homage of these waters. — I will call her.

[Manfred takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it in the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the Witch of the Alps rises beneath the arch of the sunbow of the torrent.

Beautiful Spirit! with thy hair of light,
And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form
The charms of earth's least mortal daughters grow
To an unearthly stature, in an essence
Of purer elements; while the hues of youth —
Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,

Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,
Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves
Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,
The blush of earth, embracing with her heaven —
Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame
The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.
Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow,
Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,
Which of itself shows immortality,
I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son
Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit
At times to commune with them — if that he
Avail him of his spells — to call thee thus,
And gaze on thee a moment."

Later it is again death, now really approaching, that fills Manfred's soul with peace, and enables him to enjoy the whole beauty of the last sunset. The most complete surrender, the intensest admiration are breathed in his words to the parting sun that now for him sets for the last time:

"Glorious Orb! the idol
Of early nature, and the vigorous race
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons
Of the embrace of angels, with a sex
More beautiful than they, which did draw down
The erring spirits, who can ne'er return. —
Most glorious orb! that wert a worship, ere
The mystery of thy making was reveal'd!
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,
Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops, the hearts
Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd
Themselves in orisons! Thou material God!
And representative of the Unknown —

Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou chief star!
Centre of many stars! which mak'st our earth
Endurable, and temperest the hues
And hearts of all who walk within thy rays!
Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the climes,
And those who dwell in them! for near or far,
Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee,
Even as our outward aspects; — thou dost rise
And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well!
I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first glance
Of love and wonder was for thee, then take
My latest look; thou wilt not beam on one
To whom the gifts of life and warmth have been
Of a more fatal nature. He is gone:
I follow."

"The characteristic, deep feeling of the man of genius, his unsatisfiable yearning for the consummation of existence, for perfection in sensation, thought, and volition, isolate him, make him lonely and a recluse." The mind filled with the aspirations after the highest perfection is hurt and repelled by all that is imperfect, deformed, common, stupid, and base. "Every perfection that we perceive," says Schiller, "becomes our own;" but we may add, so does every imperfection. When we fix our attention on anything ugly, stupid, or common, all that is ugly, stupid, and common within us vibrates in unison; with dread and horror we feel all the imperfections of our own natures stirred, we feel ourselves placed on a lower level. Our better self, all that is perfect within us, feels itself violated, and its pain finds expression in the indignation that anything ugly, stupid, or common rouses in us. We seek to ward it off, or to place ourselves beyond the reach of all that is imperfect, of all that debases and degrades our better self. The great majority of men,

however, are moved by base and selfish interests, they are but little concerned with any disinterested striving after beauty, truth, and moral freedom, and hence a man like Manfred goes on his way solitary, from his very childhood. When he is thrown into contact with others, he observes the imperfections in them, but at the same time all that is imperfect in himself; he "feels himself degraded back to them, and is all clay again." Manfred flees from human beings, even from those nearly related to him. He only feels happy in solitude, and quenches his thirst for beauty by the contemplation of the majestic objects of nature; his yearning for knowledge he seeks to satisfy by solitary study; his desire for the free employment of his powers drives him into danger and daring. Only one being seems to him his equal, nay, much more perfect than himself, and this being, Astarte, has been destroyed through Manfred's own fault. The Witch of the Alps, conjured up by Manfred, invites him to tell her his sorrows, and he does so in the following words:

"Well, though it torture me, 'tis but the same;
My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards
My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,
Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes;
The thirst of their ambition was not mine,
The aim of their existence was not mine;
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,
Made me a stranger; though I wore the form,
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,
Nor 'midst the creatures of clay that girded me
Was there but one who — but of her anon.
I said, with men, and with the thoughts of men,
I held but slight communion; but instead,
My joy was in the Wilderness, to breathe

The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,
Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing
Flit o'er the herbless granite; or to plunge
Into the torrent, and to roll along
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave
Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.
In these my early strength exulted; or
To follow through the night the moving moon,
The stars and their development; or catch
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim;
Or to look, list'ning, on the scatter'd leaves,
While Autumn winds were at their evening song.
These were my pastimes, and to be alone;
For if the beings, of whom I was one —
Hating to be so — cross'd me in my path,
I felt myself degraded back to them,
And was all clay again. And then I dived,
In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death,
Searching its cause in its effect; and drew
From wither'd bones, and skulls, and heap'd up dust,
Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd
The nights of years in sciences untaught,
Save in the old time; and with time and toil,
And terrible ordeal, and such penance
As in itself hath power upon the air,
And spirits that do compass air and earth,
Space, and the peopled infinite, I made
Mine eyes familiar with Eternity,
Such as, before me, did the Magi, and
He who from out their fountain dwellings raised
Eros and Anteros, at Gadara,
As I do thee; — and with my knowledge grew
The thirst of knowledge, and the power and joy
Of this most bright intelligence."

This propensity to solitude is common to all highly gifted men. They flee the bustling crowd, and in solitude or in the narrow circle of kindred spirits pursue their ideals, as Manfred does, alone or in the presence of the only being that resembled and understood him:

"I have not named to thee
Father or mother, mistress, friend, or being,
With whom I wore the chain of human ties;
If I had such, they seem'd not such to me —
Yet there was one —
She was like me in lineaments — her eyes,
Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone
Even of her voice, they said were like to mine;
But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty:
She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,
The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind
To comprehend the universe: nor these
Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,
Pity, and smiles, and tears — which I had not;
And tenderness — but that I had for her;
Humility — and that I never had.
Her faults were mine — her virtues were her own —
I loved her, and destroy'd her!"

In this and earlier passages we hear Manfred emphasise his thirst for insight and knowledge. He extols Astarte for possessing a mind capable of comprehending the universe. Now, a deeper recognition, as we have frequently observed before, leads us to recognise our own selves again in all existing things. To comprehend the universe means to find oneself again in all that lives and moves and has its being, in all the forces of nature, in men, beasts, plants, stones, in air and fire, in earth and water. The force you distinctly feel as energy in your arm, when

used to turn the crank of a dynamo-wheel, is converted into electricity, light, and heat. And, inversely, the light that reaches your eye from the most distant fixed star is only another form of the force that you feel in your arm as energy, that makes the heart beat, and that shows itself again as a living impulse, a striving to realise some idea or other. This unity of natural forces, and the unity of the human mind with all nature, with the infinite number of beings of which nature is composed, this unity, as revealed to minds of deeper knowledge, finds poetical expression in the familiar intercourse of Faust, the superman, and of Manfred with the spirits of earth, air, and all natural forces, and in their dominion over these spirits. The deeper knowledge by which one's own individuality is expanded into nature, into the universe, at the same time brings, as it were, nature and the universe into subjection. That which to other men is mute and dead, to the deeper insight of the man of genius becomes inspired with life, mind, and speech. All nature speaks to him, she reveals her secrets to him, and gives him command over herself, and power to make her serve his purposes. Therefore says Faust:

"Spirit sublime, thou gav'st me all
For which I prayed. Not unto me in vain
Hast thou thy countenance revealed in fire.
Thou gav'st me Nature as a kingdom grand,
With power to feel and to enjoy it. Thou
Not only cold, amazed acquaintance yield'st,
But grantest, that in her profoundest breast
I gaze, as in the bosom of a friend.
The ranks of living creatures thou dost lead
Before me, teaching me to know my brothers
In air and water and the silent wood."

Manfred also, the superman, possesses this deeper knowledge. Its poetical symbol is the power to conjure up spirits, the spirits of all the elements and forces of nature. Manfred calls them up and they appear, answer his questions and offer him their services:

"*First Spirit.*

Mortal! to thy bidding bow'd,
From my mansion in the cloud,
Which the breath of twilight builds,
And the summer's sunlight gilds
With the azure and vermilion,
Which is mix'd for my pavilion;
Though thy quest may be forbidden,
On a star-beam I have ridden:
To thine adjuration bow'd,
Mortal! be thy wish avow'd.

Voice of the Second Spirit.

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains:
They crown'd him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow.
Around his waist are forests braced,
The Avalanche in his hand;
But ere it fall, that thundering ball
Must pause for my command.
The Glacier's cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day;
But I am he who bids it pass,
Or with its ice delay.
I am the spirit of the place,
Could make the mountain bow
And quiver to his cavern'd base —
And what with me wouldst *Thou*?

Voice of the Third Spirit.

In the blue depth of the waters,
Where the wave hath no strife,
Where the wind is a stranger,
And the sea-snake hath life,
Where the Mermaid is decking
Her green hair with shells,
Like the storm on the surface
Came the sound of thy spells;
O'er my calm Hall of Coral
The deep echo roll'd —
To the Spirit of Ocean
Thy wishes unfold!"

But what Manfred seeks with the Spirits he cannot find. The deepened insight into the unity of all things, the knowledge of the laws and forces of nature, are powerless to lift the load from his soul, to lighten the black despair at his guilt, to undo what he has done. In vain he calls upon the Spirits to deliver him from his torment, to give him forgetfulness of the awful fate that, by his own guilt, he has brought upon her who was dearest to him on earth. "Give me oblivion, self-oblivion!" Manfred exclaims,

"Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms
Ye offer so profusely what I ask?"

The knowledge of the forces of nature and their control can, it is true, procure him material possessions, but cannot restore his peace of mind. Hence the Spirit's words,

"We can but give thee that which we possess:
Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power
O'er earth, the whole, or portion, or a sign
Which shall control the elements, whereof
We are the dominators, each and all,
These shall be thine."

So nothing is left to Manfred but the hope of peace in death. It is announced to him by Astarte. Conjured up in the Hall of Arimanes, she cries out to him: "To-morrow ends thine earthly ills." Later on, when Manfred is dying, the evil spirits approach and try to draw him down into their dark empire; but he has the strength to defy them. In spite of his many shortcomings and his many evil deeds, his soul does not fall a prey to the Evil One, because with all his human frailty and imperfection, the yearning for what is perfect and eternal has ever been alive in him. Like Faust, he has ever striven to approach the highest Life; the imperfections within him, which found utterance in wild passion and immoderate desire, and made of him a criminal, filled his heart with the deepest grief, with a bitter and terrible remorse. It is in this very agony of mind that the great and noble nature of Manfred shows itself; for such strong disapprobation as he feels for the imperfection of his own character implies the most earnest impulse towards, and the most fervent longing for, what is perfect, pure, and good. This mental nobility lends our hero the strength to reject the claim of the evil spirits on his soul, just as the conflict with the demons for the possession of Faust's immortal soul is finally gained by the angels.

"The noble Spirit now is free,
And saved from evil scheming:
Whoe'er aspires unweariedly
Is not beyond redeeming."

Manfred, like Faust, had never been under the complete sway of evil, although, in his delusion and passion he, like Faust, had made the Evil One his instrument. How deeply Manfred despised and hated the wickedness of his own nature, is shown in the curse or incantation that a Voice — the voice of conscience — is made to pronounce

over Manfred, after he had called up the Spirits. The torment of an evil conscience, which banishes all peace, here finds peculiarly poetical expression:

"And a magic voice and verse
Hath baptized thee with a curse;
And a spirit of the air
Hath begirt thee with a snare:
In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice;
All to thee shall night deny
All the quiet of her sky;
And the day shall have a sun,
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which hath strength to kill;
From thy own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring;
From thy own smile I snatch'd the snake,
For there it coil'd as in a brake;
From thy own lip I drew the charm
Which gave all these their chiefest harm;
In proving every poison known,
I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;
By the perfection of thine art
Which pass'd for human thine own heart;
By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee! and compel
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!"

How great Manfred's pain, despair, and self-abasement are, is revealed by his words, when the Spirits of the lower world summon him to bow down before Arimanes, the ruler of that region. They call to him: "Prostrate thyself, and thy condemned clay, child of the Earth! or dread the worst." With proud refusal Manfred answers: "I know it; and yet ye see I kneel not." A Spirit of the lower world cries, "'Twill be taught thee." But Manfred replies:

"'Tis taught already: — many a night on the earth,
On the bare ground, have I bow'd down my face,
And strew'd my head with ashes; I have known
The fulness of humiliation, for
I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt
To my own desolation."

He who, like Manfred, thus pronounces judgment on himself, shows at the same time that the divine principle, love, is still alive in his will: he may violate it in a moment of passion, of error, but he can never renounce it. It is for this reason that the dying Manfred does not fall a prey to the Spirits of the lower world. When the evil Spirit points to his sins with the words, "But thy many crimes have made thee" the prey of the Evil One, the dying Manfred defies him thus:

"What are they to such as thee?
Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,
And greater criminals? — Back to thy hell!
Thou hast no power upon me, that I feel;
Thou never shalt possess me, that I know;
What I have done is done; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine:
The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts —

Is its own origin of ill and end —
And its own place and time — its innate sense,
When stripp'd of this mortality, derives
No colour from the fleeting things without,
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not
tempt me;
I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey —
But was my own destroyer, and will be
My own hereafter. — Back, ye baffled fiends! —
The hand of death is on me — but not yours!"

He who passes judgment on himself will not be judged by others. The man of genius, even when he errs and does evil deeds, will in his inmost nature still turn towards that which is divine and perfect, and therefore evil and baseness cannot permanently cling to him, and draw him down into darkness. Like the eagle soaring upwards to the sun, the man of genius strives to reach the light of knowledge, truth, life, and perfection.

VII.

GENIUS AND FREEDOM OF MIND IN SCHOPENHAUER'S AND SPINOZA'S TEACHINGS

AMONGST the finest things ever written on the subject of genius are the Third Book, "*The Platonic Idea: The Object of Art,*" and the Supplements of the Third Book, "*On Genius,*" of Schopenhauer's chief work, "The World as Will and Idea." But it would be injudicious to swear unreservedly by the words of the master and to accept his statements and assertions indiscriminately as correct and incontestably true. Schopenhauer is frequently in error, but even then he is always sagacious and stimulating, and whether we agree with him or attempt to refute him, we shall always feel that we acquire an increase of knowledge from close study of his work.

No objection can be raised to his particular definition of genius. "*Genius,*" he says, "is simply the completest *objectivity*, i. e., the objective tendency of the mind, as opposed to the subjective, which is directed to one's own self — in other words, to the will."[1] It must here be pointed out, however, that by will Schopenhauer really means selfish will, and that it is an error on his part to speak of will in general, instead of contrasting only the

[1] *The World as Will and Idea.* Translated by R. B. Haldane & J. Kemp. 6th ed., 1907-09, vol. I, p. 240.

selfish will with genius. For will is present always, even with the completest objectivity; the difference is only that will thus combined with the most perfect objectivity, is a perfectly objective, a perfectly good will. With this addition, however, Schopenhauer's definition is entirely correct: "Genius is the objective tendency of the mind as opposed to the subjective, which is directed to one's own self — in other words, to the" — selfish — "will".

But Schopenhauer's conception of genius requires still further completion. For, as is shown by the words which immediately follow his definition, by genius he means preferably, if not exclusively, artistic genius, and neglects philosophical and practical genius. After having defined genius as the most perfect objectivity, he says, "Thus genius is the faculty of continuing in the state of pure perception, of losing oneself in perception, and of enlisting in this service the knowledge which originally existed only for the service of the" — selfish — "will; that is to say, genius is the power of leaving one's own interests, wishes, and aims entirely out of sight, thus of entirely renouncing one's own personality for a time, so as to remain *pure knowing subject*, clear vision of the world; and this not merely at moments, but for a sufficient length of time, and with sufficient consciousness, to enable one to reproduce by deliberate art what has thus been apprehended, and 'to fix in lasting thoughts the wavering images that float before the mind.'"[1]

This is entirely correct, but applies here especially to artistic genius. Schopenhauer's own words, however, have a wider bearing. He says further, "It is as if, when genius appears in an individual, a far larger measure of the power of knowledge falls to his lot than is necessary for the service of an individual will; and

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. I, p. 240.

this superfluity of knowledge, being free, now becomes subject purified from will, a clear mirror of the inner nature of the world."[1]

These words point to more than artistic genius alone, for he whose mind becomes a clear mirror of the inner nature of the world is not necessarily bound to be an artist and to translate his inspired objective perception into colour or sound; he may just as well reproduce his intuitions in abstract ideas, he may be a man of science, a great investigator and philosophical genius such as Schopenhauer himself was. The mind is capable not only of sensation, but also of thought, and when it becomes the clear mirror of the inner nature of the world, then this nature may be reflected in the mind not only in sensation, but also, and indeed under certain circumstances preferably, in the mode of thinking. When this reflection is fixed and reproduced, it results, in the first case, in a work of art, and in the second, in a system of abstract thoughts, in a large and comprehensive idea.

But we can go still further and say that the mind is not only capable of sensation and thought, but that it also has strivings and desires which aim at bringing about certain changes in the outer world, at producing definite actions, and these strivings and desires will likewise be in the closest connection with the way in which the world is reflected in the mind. If the surface of the mental mirror be dim and soiled, cracked and full of flaws, not only will all that which finds entrance through sensation be distorted and full of defects, not only will the thought be untrue and one-sided, but also the strivings and desires which determine the actions will be impure and base.

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. I, p. 240.

Schopenhauer himself has treated genius or objectivity of aspiration and desire in detail in the Fourth Book entitled "*The Assertion and Denial of the Will*"[1]; only he imparts a want of clearness to the subject by speaking of a denial of the will in general, instead of confining his remarks to a denial of the subjectively interested, selfish will. What Schopenhauer calls the Denial of the Will is nothing but a change of direction of the will. The will in itself, as a force, as an energy, is indestructible; its aim alone may be changed, and it is exactly the nature of this aim that distinguishes the man of genius from the narrow-minded man. The object of the latter's will is his own small person, whereas in proportion to the growth of genius in a man, there is a corresponding increase in the importance and scope of the object or aim at which the will is directed, till, on reaching the highest stage, it embraces all that exists, the universe.

The will that is concerned merely with one's self is called self-seeking, the will whose aim rises above one's self is called love. What Schopenhauer calls denial of will may more correctly be termed denial of self-seeking; but the denial of self-seeking is at the same time the assertion of love, that is, the assertion of the will that has an aim rising above one's own small person. Thus Schopenhauer's denial of the will is at the same time an assertion of the will.

Schopenhauer's expression is therefore misleading and must be replaced by a more exact term which will at the same time remove the apparent contradiction contained in Schopenhauer's own dicta. For whereas, in various sections of his work, he treats very minutely of the negation and suppression of the will, he himself declares repeatedly and expressly that the will as an original

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. I, p. 349.

force and energy can never be suppressed and destroyed. According to him the will is the thing-in-itself, that is, the real essence, the nucleus of all things, and consequently indestructible. The forms in which it is manifested, embodied or, as he expresses it, objectified can shift and change, but the will itself as the original force, as the thing-in-itself, as an actual existence and reality, continues to exist to all eternity. Schopenhauer says: "The will, as the thing-in-itself, constitutes the inner, true, and indestructible nature of man."[1]

Inasmuch too as Schopenhauer puts all natural forces on the same plane as that which we recognise in ourselves as force, energy, or will, he acknowledges the indestructibility of the will; for according to the law of the conservation of energy, there only exist changes in the form, in the mode of operation of forces, but never a destruction or annihilation of the force itself.

If, therefore, Schopenhauer says that "the nature of genius consists in pre-eminent capacity for pure contemplation," and that "this requires that a man should entirely forget himself,"[2] we must not allow ourselves to be misled into considering genius as something inactive, as a mental state without energy or will in which the mind passively submits to whatever may happen. That would be an absolute mistake: for genius is not weakness, not mere passivity, but the highest energy, the highest concentration of power, the most pronounced activity, and therefore the highest form of will to live. But if the whole power of the mind is fixed on one point, if one's whole energy is developed in one direction, and the will to live assumes one particular form of existence, naturally other forms of existence are neglected, or at least temporarily disdained, and then no energy is left over for

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. II, p. 411. — [2] Id. vol. I, p. 240.

other aims and no power remains to be applied in other directions. Thus the mistake may easily arise that no volition or power is thought to be present, where in reality the most intensive will holds sway.

Let us imagine a lover of music listening to one of Beethoven's Symphonies. Is his mental condition purely passive? Are his will and energy entirely suspended because he feels no desire for any particular thing as a dog does for a bone or a child for an apple? The enthusiastic lover of Beethoven's music shows himself devoid of will and energy in other directions, only because his whole will, his entire energy, is concentrated on one particular point, on listening to the music. As long as the sounds float around him, he is all ear, all sensation, and has, therefore, no relish or interest for other things. He lives in the process of hearing, his will to live assumes the form of the sensation of hearing. Thus we know of people whose whole life is absorbed in music, who, as they themselves express it, live only in music. To speak, in this connection, of a denial of the will to live is an abuse of terms, for here there is no denial of the will to live, but only certain other forms of existence are neglected in favour of one particular form that is now adopted and realised with all possible energy.

That vital energy rises at one point, when it is lowered at another, is familiar to everyone in numerous instances. The man who has lost the power of sight, acquires an exceedingly fine sense of hearing and touch instead. The energy, which had previously been claimed by his sight, is now divided between his two other chief senses, and results in their more acute development. A shrub, pruned at the top, grows all the more vigorously at the sides, and thus there is everywhere compensation and equali-

sation, so that no force or energy is ever lost, but only assumes new forms.

That by genius or objectivity of sensation, thought, and volition no passive condition devoid of will and energy can be meant, is shown by Schopenhauer's own words. After having stated that "the superfluity of knowledge, being free, now becomes subject purified from will, a clear mirror of the inner nature of the world," he continues: "This explains the activity, amounting even to disquietude, of men of genius, for the present can seldom satisfy them, because it does not fill their consciousness. This gives them that restless aspiration, that unceasing desire for new things, and for the contemplation of lofty things, and also that longing that is hardly ever satisfied, for men of similar nature, their equals, to whom they might communicate themselves; whilst the common mortal, entirely filled and satisfied by the common present, ends in it, and finding everywhere his like, enjoys that peculiar satisfaction in daily life that is denied to genius."[1]

This plainly enough designates precisely the man of genius as the man who bears within him a higher striving, a more active impulse, more ardent desire, more fervent wish towards the realisation of some ideal, and who is thus, at the same time, much more capable of suffering than the average man, but also more capable of enjoying a transcendent happiness, according as his endeavour or will is hindered or assisted in the attainment of its aim. The will to live is the more strongly pronounced, the more the individual is endowed with genius; but at the same time the will to live assumes ever higher and more refined forms, and hence, under certain circumstances, such a higher and finer form of the will to live may be taken,

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. I, pp. 240-41.

by one unacquainted with the truth, for something opposed to the vital impulse, for something hostile to life, for a will, so to say, to die, for a kind of nihilism. Nietzsche uses for it the term "ascetic ideal."

To take an instance from the realm of ethics, let us think of Jesus Christ, who went to His death with full consciousness, and sealed the truth of His words by His death. Was it the will to live or the will to die that determined His actions as well as His doctrines? For the pessimist and nihilist it may be easy to answer: it was the will to die, the will to escape from this vale of tears, from this realm of misery and sin into the better world beyond, or into nothingness. And yet this would be radically wrong. It was not death that Christ sought, it was life, but a life that death cannot overcome and over which it has no power. With a heart full of infinite love, He embraced all human beings, His life overflowed into their lives; He wished to lead them to the highest perfection of their lives, as He experienced in Himself the highest life, the highest perfection of the will to live, so that, on the one hand, He could designate the "God of the living" [1] as His "Father," and on the other hand Himself as the "Son of Man," as a representative of humanity, the humanity which craves for life and happiness. Of Jesus Christ, if of anyone, it could be said that His soul became "the clear mirror of the inner nature of the world;" but there can be no question of a denial of the will to live. Jesus rejects only the lower forms of the will to live, the hasty and eager pursuit of petty interests, because they stand in the way of the realisation of the higher forms of the will to live: "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life

[1] Matt. xxii. 32.

more than meat, and the body than raiment? Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

The higher man rises above the lower forms of the will to live, the larger also will the sphere of his interests grow, the more will he live with and in others, the more intense will his own life be and the greater his enjoyment of it.

Therefore Schopenhauer says, "Genius is its own reward: for the best that one is, one must necessarily be for oneself. When we look up to a great man of former times, wo do not think, 'How happy is he to be still admired by all of us!' but, 'How happy must he have been in the immediate enjoyment of a mind at the surviving traces of which centuries revive themselves.'"[1]

The knowledge that the will to live, by disregarding the lower forms, is capable of assuming ever higher forms, till, in the highest form, it becomes one with the will of God, has found expression in Spinoza's "Ethics." But whereas Schopenhauer by genius means in particular artistic genius, Spinoza represents it one-sidedly as intellectual or philosophical genius. According to Schopenhauer genius consists in æsthetic perception, according to Spinoza in philosophic understanding.

Spinoza never uses the word genius, he speaks only in quite a general way of the mind of man and of its relation to God, but while plainly showing how man may be more or less free from base desires and passions, how man in his own human nature is capable of approaching more or less to the Deity, how his knowledge may be more or less purified by the intellect, he at the same time points to the characteristic differences between what we call genius and narrow-mindedness, or between what Spinoza terms man's freedom and bondage.

[1] *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. III, p. 151

In a previous chapter reference has already been made to the connection between genius and mental freedom; but for the clearer understanding of Spinoza it is, perhaps, better once more to explain this relation. We call any activity free, when its purpose is centred in itself, when it is performed for its own sake. A sensation is free, when it has itself for its purpose. When we hear, only in order to hear, when we look, only for the sake of looking, without pursuing any theoretical or practical purpose, the result is what is called a free, an æsthetic sensation. Hearing and seeing cause pleasure in themselves, they are connected with a feeling of delight, when nothing further is desired than to hear and to see. So likewise thinking must be called free, when it is its own purpose. When we seek to understand the world, to grasp the truth, without at the same time pursuing any purpose beyond, this finding and understanding of the truth in itself causes pleasure. Further, every practical activity, every action and piece of work must be considered free, whenever it is performed for its own sake, without regard to other purposes.

Now, the more a man is inspired by genius, the more will he devote himself with undivided mind and interest, to all that he perceives by the senses, thinks, and does, and the freer, therefore, must he be considered in every exercise of his natural powers. A man is bound, when forced to do something against his will; on the other hand, he is free, when he occupies himself with an object entirely of his own accord, and consequently with all his mind. Genius consists in nothing but a very vivid and living interest in what affects our senses, stirs our thoughts, and influences our actions, an interest to which we may also apply the term love. Since, as before stated, we are free in whatever we do with all our heart

and soul, genius is identical with freedom. A man of genius is at the same time a free man, free at least in that in which his genius consists. So whenever Spinoza speaks of free men, we can substitute the expression "men of genius."

The freedom of sensation, that is, of æsthetic sensation, is entirely disregarded by Spinoza. The ideas of beauty and deformity are dealt with quite cursorily in a single passage. He speaks with a certain contempt of these ideas, which seem to him to have reference only to the imperfection of man, but not to the perfection of God. It is hardly possible to believe that Spinoza was devoid of all appreciation of perfection of outside appearance, of what we call natural and artistic beauty; it is more probable that he merely did not fix his attention on that kind of mental activity called sensation, but primarily kept in view knowledge, understanding, and thought, and secondarily what is their natural development, namely, practical conduct. Spinoza says:

"The ignorant consider all things as made for themselves; and call the nature of a thing good, evil, sound, putrid, or corrupt, just as they are affected by it. For example, if the motion by which the nerves are affected by means of objects represented to the eye conduces to well-being, the objects by which it is caused are called *beautiful;* while those exciting a contrary motion are called *deformed.* Those things, too, which stimulate the senses through the nostrils are called sweet-smelling or stinking; those which act through the taste are called sweet or bitter, full-flavoured or insipid; those which act through the touch, hard or soft, heavy or light; those, lastly, which act through the ears are said to make a noise, sound, or harmony, the last having caused men to lose their senses to such a degree that they have believed that

God even is delighted with it. Indeed, philosophers may be found who have persuaded themselves that the celestial motions beget a harmony. All these things sufficiently show that everyone judges things by the constitution of his brain, or rather accepts the affections of his imagination in the place of things."[1]

Of course, little can be done with this. Only the one truth may be drawn from these remarks of Spinoza's, namely, that like all contrary ideas, so also those of beauty and deformity are to be taken relatively. What is beautiful to one person may be ugly to another, and *vice versa*. In things themselves, as Spinoza truly says, there is no inherent absolute deformity or beauty. It is our mind, our sensation, that attributes beauty or ugliness to things; but according to Spinoza's own teaching, our mind itself is a portion of Nature, a part of God, and it is the divine, the perfect itself in man that enables him to see and feel outward perfection and beauty. Spinoza's interest, however, dwells principally on thought and understanding, and not on sensation. He is entirely a philosopher, and so one-sided in this respect, that he can conceive even of the love of God only, so to say, as a philosophical, an intellectual one: "*Amor dei intellectualis*," that love of God which consists in the pure knowledge of God's nature, means for Spinoza the highest perfection to which the human mind can rise.

It is true that, as our actions depend more or less on our understanding of things, a pure and true knowledge of the nature of things cannot fail to determine our conduct. Instead of allowing ourselves to be led by our passions and desires, rational reflection will become our guide in the labyrinth of life, and therefore it is that

[1] *Ethic*. Translated by W. H. White; translation revised by A. H. Stirling. 4th ed., 1910, pp. 44, 45.

Spinoza makes the intellect or reason the basis of the conduct of the free man or, as we call him, the man of genius. Accordingly he treats "of the power of the intellect, or of human liberty" and endeavours to show the ways and means which lead to freedom from the power of the passions and desires, or "affects." "In this part," he says, "I shall treat of the power of reason, showing how much reason itself can control the affects, and then what freedom of mind or blessedness is. Thence we shall see how much stronger the wise man is than the ignorant."[1]

Spinoza himself, however, must confess that the power of reason over passions and desires is but a conditional and limited one. He says: "I shall occupy myself here solely with the power of the mind or of reason, first of all showing the extent and nature of the command which it has over the affects in restraining them and governing them; for that we have not absolute command over them we have already demonstrated."[2]

This truth daily experience also teaches us. We have all of us, beyond doubt, often enough been drawn into error against our own better insight, when passion, fear, or desire have come into play. We often distinctly and clearly see what is right, our reason tells us quite plainly what we ought to do, and yet, impelled by some irrational passion, we turn a deaf ear to it.

A rational idea becomes effective only when it itself receives an impetus, when it ceases to be a mere rational idea, but points the way for a living impulse, for an onward-striving force. Every power of the mind that gives a definite direction to the soul of man is called by Spinoza an affect, and the truth that an affect, a living impulse, a passion cannot be removed or limited in its

[1] *Ethic*, p. 250. — [2] Id. p. 250.

living activity by a mere rational idea, but that affect must be put up against affect, power against power, passion against passion, if any result is to be reached, is expressed by Spinoza himself in the words: "An affect cannot be restrained nor removed unless by an opposed and stronger affect."[1]

For him, therefore, who has an interest not only in the recognition of truth as such, as was the case with Spinoza, but also in leading men to a godly and rational mode of life by means of the recognition of truth, as with Jesus Christ, it will be impossible to remain satisfied with the mere intellectual love of God, that is, with that love of God which consists in a pure knowledge of His nature and at the same time in a knowledge of the nature of the world. He will first of all see his highest task in the active, practical love of God, and this will be for him identical with the active, practical love of man. Christ did not simply retire to His closet and there construct a philosophical system by which the impulse to gain knowledge should be satisfied within us, but He went out into the market-places and lanes, into the houses and synagogues, healing and comforting, and working on others by His living example, until His last and greatest act which was the sealing of His infinite love to God and man by an ignominious and agonising death. It was not His teaching alone that lent to Christ His vast power over human minds, but the imitative impulse called forth and brought to life by His actions. There emanated from His personality a power that enabled others to convert His teachings into acts.

But if Spinoza is one-sided in his estimate of knowledge, that is of freedom or genius of pure thought, he is undeniably great in the conception and development of his

[1] *Ethic*, p. 185.

philosophical system. With the incomparable insight of genius he grasped those principles that are at the base of all that exists, and erected upon them a marvellous system into which every great discovery of modern science, and especially of natural science can easily be fitted. Thus the cell-theory, atomism, the law of the conservation of energy, the doctrine of evolution, and other important truths with which we have become acquainted within the last fifty years, are already indicated in Spinoza's system and are in perfect harmony with it. But the most far-reaching of all is the truth on which the whole system is based, namely, that all that exists belongs to the one Nature, to the one essence of God, which finds expression in the vast multiplicity of the things of this world and which is, nevertheless, one spiritual Unity. "The more we understand individual objects," says Spinoza, "the more we understand God;"[1] that is, the deeper the understanding we gain of the nature of individual things and the better we grasp their true idea, the more completely shall we recognise their closer connection with the highest idea, the idea of God.

This deeper knowledge of ideas and their connection with the highest idea of God is accompanied by most intense enjoyment, since by its means man's power of thought reaches its highest expression. The impulse towards knowledge obtains thereby its fullest satisfaction, and that blessedness arises which, according to Spinoza, is combined with the intellectual love of God: "The highest good of the mind," says Spinoza, "is the knowledge of God."[2] And it is the impulse towards the highest knowledge that Spinoza calls the mind's intellectual love towards God. But, according to him, this impulse is of divine origin, and emanates from God Himself; the more

[1] *Ethic*, p. 270. — [2] Id. p. 200.

a man is inspired from on high and expresses in his own nature the nature of God, the stronger is that impulse towards the highest knowledge, hence "The intellectual love of the mind towards God is the very love with which He loves Himself, in so far as He can be manifested through the essence of the human mind."[1]

This doctrine of Spinoza's is correct, but one-sided, as before said. The divine principle in man reveals itself not only in this impulse, in this love for knowledge, but just as much in the love for what is beautiful and creative. Just as there is bliss in the satisfaction of the striving after knowledge, so there is bliss in the satisfaction of the passion for beauty and the impulse towards action. Hence there is not only an *intellectual* love of the mind towards God, but also an *æsthetic* and a *practical* one. When perfection enters into our thoughts, we conceive of it as *truth*, when it enters through our senses, it appears as *beauty*, and when it expresses itself in action, it becomes a *creative deed*. The practical love of the mind towards that which is eternal is the highest love and has found its most beautiful embodiment in Christ and in Buddha.

[1] *Ethic*, p. 276.

VIII.

THE AWAKENING OF MENTAL FREEDOM THROUGH CHRIST AND BUDDHA

WHILE in Spinoza we recognise the representative of the philosophical, or as he calls it, intellectual love of God, in Jesus Christ we see the embodiment of the active and practical love of God. But this active and practical love of God is explicitly declared by Christ to coincide with the active and practical love of man in His words: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."[1] Let us see how this is meant.

To love an object is to desire its existence, to desire all that belongs to its existence. If our attitude towards the beloved object is an æsthetic one, one of sensation, our love will find expression in the fact that in our sense-perception of the beloved object we specially notice those points that meet our wish for its unimpeded, unchecked existence, namely, all that is harmonious and perfect in its outer aspect; for the harmony in outside appearance, which we call beauty, is in the closest con-

[1] Matt. xxii. 37-40.

nection with the harmonious co-operation of the parts of the object, and on this harmonious co-operation of its parts depends its existence, its life.

Again, if our attitude towards the beloved object is a theoretical one, one of thought and understanding, this love will find expression in the fact that we seek to comprehend and connect in ideas all upon which the beloved object's existence is based; we endeavour to grasp the fundamental idea of its existence, the law by which it is originated and further developed and according to which all its parts co-operate so as to produce an animated whole tending to an ever greater fulness of life.

Lastly, if our love is active and practical, it will find expression in an endeavour to promote by our actions everything necessary to the existence, to the life of the beloved object; we shall endeavour to benefit it, and whenever its existence is at stake, whenever its life is threatened or impeded, we shall actively interfere, in order to remove all interruptions and hindrances, and to permit the beloved object full play in the development of its will to live. For existence is identical with the desire to exist, namely, in some definite form or shape. Existence or Life is inconceivable without the will to live, without an impulse, a force, an energy directed towards existence. But this will to live is always, as before said, connected with some definite form, with some particular type, with some idea which it is the innate impulse of the object itself, in the course of its development, to realise. Existence itself, therefore, always includes the will to exist in some definite manner. The essence or nature of every object consists in the endeavour, in the impulse, in the power, to become existent, to maintain its existence, and to develop according to quite a definite law. This is what Spinoza means, when he says, "The effort by which each thing endeavours

to persevere in its own being is nothing but the actual essence of the thing itself." [1]

If, therefore, we love a man, and desire to put this love into practice, we must, in order to succeed, carefully observe his real endeavour, his aim in life, and decide what is best calculated to promote his intentions. Otherwise the result might easily be that, instead of serving, we might injure him, and instead of furthering his existence, impede it.

When we apply this truth to religion, to the active and practical love of God, the question arises: How shall we serve God truly, how can our active, practical love of God find its most proper expression? The answer is: We can truly serve God in exactly the same manner in which we truly serve the man we love, namely, by promoting His interests, by doing His will, and by contributing in every respect to an assertion of His being.

But now the further questions suggest themselves: What are the interests of God? To what is His will directed? How can we contribute to an assertion of His being? Of the man we love, we have a knowledge; we know what he desires and how to do him service, how to give him pleasure; we know his necessities and how to relieve them: but God is far away, we neither see nor hear Him, He has no definite form for us, He is at once the Omnipotent Whose will nothing can resist, and the All-satisfied, the All-blessed Who is not in want of anything, how can we feeble, insignificant creatures give Him practical proof of our love?

Apparently the only thing left is the negative proof of our active love, namely, sacrifice. By renouncing something that is dear and precious to us, by making a

[1] *Ethic.* Translated by W. H. White; translation revised by A. H. Stirling. 4th ed., 1910, p. 114.

sacrifice, even when the beloved being derives no benefit from it, we show of how much importance the beloved being is to us.

But this proof of love is of a purely negative kind, and thus, since it lacks all positive significance for the beloved being, completely fails in its purpose. A sacrifice that merely injures us, without benefiting the person we love, that thwarts our own existence, without positively furthering the other's, would be devoid of any sense unless the person we love should hate us, or, possessed by vanity, should delight in what hurts us, thereby feeling himself aggrandised. A sacrifice without any sensible aim, a sacrifice that does not really promote the welfare of him for whose benefit it is made, does not come within the scope of active love. In what shape, then, shall reverence of God practically manifest itself?

If God were really so far removed from man, as appears at first sight, man could in no way whatever put his love of God into practice. But God is not far removed from man, God lives, moves and has His being in man himself and all that surrounds him. God has divided Himself into an infinite number of creatures. He has descended from His infinite greatness, freedom, and perfection, and now lives in a humble form in the atom, in the worm, in man. Yet the divine element does not renounce its nature even in its humble shape, but strives to return from the multiplicity of finite, limited existences to the unity of the highest being, of the most perfect life. In this striving of all created things after ever higher forms of being, of life, in this endeavour more and more to attain to a well-ordered, pregnant unity of being from out their own unconnected multiplicity, in this striving and endeavour consists the will of God, and does the existence of the divine principle

find expression. The will to live, in the quality of the desire for an ever higher life, is at the same time the will of God.

Therefore let him who desires to serve God actively, promote life, "for God," as Christ says, "is not the God of the dead, but of the living."[1]

The more exalted the life is that we promote, the more shall we act in accordance with the will of God, the more shall we please and the better shall we serve Him. Now, of all known creatures man is the one in whom life is most highly developed, and hence we serve God most effectively when we serve man.

Religion or the service of God is at the same time the service of man; active love of God is identical with active love of our fellow-beings. In truth, we cannot otherwise please God than by benefiting the creatures in whom His nature and will are most distinctly expressed. Accordingly Christ says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."[2] And further: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."[3]

The service of God is easily misunderstood. Narrow-minded people judge of God according to their own petty dispositions, and conceive of Him as a vain, selfish being, whom we serve by burning incense before Him, by

[1] Matt. xxii. 32. — [2] Matt. xxii. 37. — [3] Matt. xx. 25-28.

flattery, penance, and sacrifices. God desires nothing of all this, He rather desires, solely and exclusively, the fullest, most pregnant life of His creatures, and He who promotes this life, or removes the obstacles that lie in its way, at the same time renders the existence of the divine principle more effective and does the will of God; but he who only burns incense, murmurs prayers, offers up sacrifices, while allowing the creatures of God to perish in misery and destitution, when it is in his power to help, only pretends to serve God, while, in reality, he injures and affronts Him.

Accordingly Christ says with reference to the Last Judgment, "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."[1]

The fact that religion, the practical application of the love of God, does not consist in any special ceremonies, prayers, or sacrifices, but intrinsically in the practical application of the love of man, in an upright, useful life, in profitable labour and good works, is constantly and repeatedly emphasised by Christ. When the Pharisees

[1] Matt. xxv. 34-40.

reproached Him for sitting and eating with publicans and sinners, He said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."[1] And further: "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? . . . Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."[2] And the beautiful words of St. Paul will be familiar to all: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."[3]

Now, if he on whom the gift of divine grace has descended loves not men alone, but the divine principle which is in man, if he, at the same time, fulfils the will of God by pleasing and serving men, he will not allow himself to be deterred from his purpose, in this his service of God, by evil treatment at their hands, or by ingratitude in return for kindness. If he did good only for the sake of reward or gratitude, he would not be doing it for God's sake. But if he does it freely, from an impulse of the heart, because the divine element is alive within him, he requires neither reward nor thanks; doing good itself causes him joy. Hence Spinoza's statement: "*Blessedness is not the prize of virtue, but is virtue itself.*"[4]

Actions, that in themselves produce pleasure, because our whole heart and soul are in them, and because we attach no importance to any purpose beyond them, we call free actions, and designate as play, making them the attribute of men endowed with genius. The man who does good freely, with all his soul, and for pure love of it,

[1] Matt. ix. 12, 13. — [2] Matt. vii. 16, 21. — [3] 1 Corinth. xiii. 1-8. — [4] *Ethic*, p. 282.

neither heeds his own advantage nor the attitude of him whom he benefits. Just in the same way as the artistic genius is completely absorbed in love for his work, without giving a thought to any personal advantage or disadvantage that may arise from it, so the genius who is actuated by charitable motives is engrossed by the love of his philanthropic labours themselves regardless of the love or hatred by which he is repaid. But in as far as a man is disinterestedly immersed in his work and in as far as all his thoughts and exertions are concentrated on its full and perfect accomplishment, in so far also will he gain in inner freedom and independence, in vitality of soul, in spiritual perfection, and thus approach the perfection of the highest Being, Who with infinite love embraces all things and rejoices in all Life.

It is in this sense that we must take the words of Christ: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."[1]

The man whose actions promote life is like to God the Creator, Whose power and will are the foundation and means of continuance of all life. To be entirely absorbed in one's labour and to engage in it with all one's heart and soul, one must possess a will which is disinterested, and directed to objective ends, the divine will of the man of genius. One must be free from all selfish narrowness, from petty vanity, greed, and dogmatism, at least as far as this particular labour is concerned. As soon as the purpose we have in view is influenced by considerations other than those immediately connected with the work in hand, its perfection will infallibly suffer. Interest will be divided, partially diverted from the work itself, and will consequently fail just when its whole power should be applied.

Disinterestedness and selfishness, perfection and imperfection in man and in all his sense-perceptions, thoughts, and actions may be compared to the two scales of a balance. The one scale cannot sink without the other simultaneously rising, and *vice versa*. Now, since by an endeavour to attain to perfection in any direction the divine principle is at the same time to some extent realised, every disinterested absorption in one's work is a service rendered to God. On the other hand, every thought of aims apart from the work itself, a regard for personal advantages, for gain, and for similar ends, makes this true service of God impossible. Hence the words of Christ, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and

[1] Matt. v. 38-48.

despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."[1] And again, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."[2]

Christ's commandment that we should not resist evil, but love our enemies, and to him who smites us on the one cheek turn the other, would lead to an entirely fallacious conclusion, if from it we inferred that Christ thereby taught dull resignation and weak submission to fate, and that in this He saw the perfection of man. Not dull resignation is expressed in His words, but the highest energy, will, and life, as His own actions testify. The meaning of Christ's commandment is: If you have a work of love before you and know that you are on the right way to accomplish it, your whole mind should be so given to it, that nothing can divert you from it, not even good or evil that may be done you. Call up all your energy, all your vital power, and direct them solely and exclusively to your work, remain indifferent to whatever is unconnected with your work of love and has reference only to your own finite and perishable self, then life will emanate from you, you will be life-inspiring, like unto God, Who makes His warmth and life-giving sun to rise on the evil and on the good alike, on those that serve Him as well as on those that despise Him.

In the principle of setting man free from the sway of passions and desires, and of providing him with strength to direct all his energy and fulness of life towards one point which lies in the direction of what is eternal, the teachings of Buddha agree with those of Christ. The man who attains to disinterestedness, acquires at the same time sovereignty, power, and freedom: for the selfish man may be ruled by everyone who knows how to work upon his passions and desires; but the disinterested

[1] Matt. vi. 24. — [2] Luke ix. 62.

man is not to be influenced, for he neither fears nor hopes anything for himself. Pursuing his own way, he carries out what he considers right, without allowing himself to be diverted from his actions by promises or threats, by the strokes of fate or the freaks of fortune. The disinterested man is, to a certain extent, superior to fate, to what is good or evil for his own person, therefore to a certain extent superior to pleasure and pain.

The man of lofty genius, whose whole interest is concentrated on one object, has, as it were, no interest left over for other things, so that, if we left this one object out of sight, we might easily be led into thinking that he is altogether devoid of interests, insensible to all things, on the way to death, to nothingness, to Nirvâna. We are specially liable to fall into this mistake when the point on which the disinterested, free man has fixed his gaze, lies beyond the horizon of all other people, when it lies in the infinite itself. The man who, filled with love of the highest existence, wishes to overleap all intermediate stages and plunge directly into eternal perfection, appears to ordinary, weak mortals like a maniac who spurns the solid ground under his feet and hurls himself from a tower in the belief that he can fly. Hence Buddha says: "It will be hard for humanity to understand the law of causality, the chain of cause and effect. And this too will be very hard for men to understand: the coming to rest of all conditions of being, the dropping of everything earthly, the extinction of lust, the cessation of desire, the end, — Nirvâna." [1]

This Nirvâna, eternity, perfection, the highest life and existence, as well as that which Christ calls the Kingdom

[1] Hermann Oldenberg, *Buddha. Sein Leben, seine Lehre, seine Gemeinde.* 5. Auflage, 1906, p. 309.

of God, appears to the selfish view of the man dominated by the things of this world as a nothing, as the end, as the annihilation of all that seems of value to him.

In the world, the laws of nature hold sway; all phenomena are strictly regulated by the law of cause and effect. Man is able to make the laws of nature to a certain degree subservient to him, but his power in this respect does not extend very far. Old age, sickness, death, all kinds of physical and mental sufferings he is powerless to ward off either from himself or from those dear to him. If then his heart is only in the things of this world, no consolation or hope will be left to him when suffering or annihilation draws near. But if he renounces all earthly things, if his fervent desire for the enjoyments and things of this world ceases, if he abandons his habit of making his frail confined person the central point of the universe, and of connecting everything with this transitory self of his, his soul will attain freedom, will become a clear mirror of the universe, and enjoy the blessedness of the highest existence, of the most perfect life, the blessedness of Nirvâna. Hence according to Buddha's teaching "the disciple who has put off lust and desire, rich in wisdom, has attained here on earth the deliverance from death, has attained rest, Nirvâna, the eternal state . . . He who has escaped from the hard, deceptive paths of Sansâra, who has crossed over and reached the other shore, self-absorbed, without wavering and without doubt, who has delivered himself from the earthly, and attained Nirvâna, him I call a true Brahman."[1]

In reference to this Oldenberg states: "It is not an anticipation in language, but the absolutely exact expression of the dogmatic thought, when not merely the hereafter which awaits the saved saint, but the perfection

[1] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 312.

which he already attains in this life, is called Nirvâna. What is to be extinguished, has been extinguished, the fire of lust, hatred, and bewilderment. In unsubstantial distance lie hope and fear: desire, the clinging to the illusion of the ego is subdued, as a man casts from him the foolish wishes of childhood... If we are to indicate the precise point at which for the Buddhist the goal is reached, we have not to look to the entrance of the dying Perfect One into the sphere of the everlasting, but to that moment of his earthly life when he has attained the state of sinlessness and painlessness. This is the true Nirvâna." [1]

That is to say, Nirvâna, the aim of the Buddhists, although apparently something different, is ultimately one and the same with what Christ calls the kingdom of God, the kingdom of peace, the kingdom of the highest life and existence, which every truly disinterested man carries within his own breast even here on earth. Nirvâna is the kingdom of love, the kingdom of the union of hearts, the kingdom of freedom and bliss, the kingdom of deliverance from all the woes, hardships, and miseries of this world. Thus Buddha says: "As the great ocean, O disciples, is permeated by only one taste, the taste of salt, so also, O disciples, this Doctrine and this Law are pervaded by only one taste, the taste of salvation." [2]

Max Müller too has seen in Nirvâna the perfection of being, not its annihilation. He says, "If we look in the Dhamma-pada at every passage where Nirvâna is mentioned, there is not one which would require that its meaning should be annihilation, while most, if not all, would become perfectly unintelligible if we assigned to the word Nirvâna" that signification. [3]

[1] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 313. — [2] Id. p. 314. — [3] F. W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, 1894, p. 115.

The Gospel according to St. John attributes to Christ the words: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Buddha also taught the way to the cessation of pain, the way to the release from death, the way to life, to Nirvâna. What else should this way be but the abandonment of selfishness and the awakening of love, of compassion, and sympathy with all life?

Christ says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness,"[1] by which He means sympathy and love for men. In Buddha's teachings this sympathy and love are also called righteousness or uprightness which consists chiefly in the observance of the five commandments, not to kill a living being, not to seize another's property wrongfully, not to touch another's wife, not to speak falsehood, and not to drink intoxicating liquors.[2]

"How shall a disciple of Buddha partake of uprightness?" is the question asked in the Buddhistic writings, and the answer is: "A disciple of Buddha abstains from killing living creatures. He lays down the cudgel. He lays down the sword. He is compassionate and tenderhearted. In loving kindness he seeks the well-being of all living creatures."[3]

With reference to the commandment against speaking falsehood and spreading slander, the disciple of Buddha is thus described: "Putting away slander, he abstains from calumny. What he hears here he repeats not there to raise a quarrel against the people of this place; what he hears there he repeats not here to raise a quarrel against the people of that place. Thus he lives as a binder together of those who are divided, an encourager of those who are friends. In peace is his daily walk and conversation. Peace is his delight. He is a lover of peace, a

[1] Matt. vi. 33. — [2] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 341. — [3] Id. p. 342.

speaker of the words that make peace. This too is a part of his uprightness." [1]

Who is not reminded by this of the beatitudes of Christ? "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." [2]

The disinterestedness, the objectivity, and the complete devotion of the heart, which, in accordance with Goethe and Schopenhauer, we described as the essential attributes of the man of genius, are at the same time the tokens of that tendency of mind which Christ and Buddha look upon as the life-giving principle that delivers us from wretchedness, death, and despair, and leads us to what is eternal, to God or to Nirvâna and to the fulness of bliss. Love is the secret of all life. The loving man is at the same time the life-giver. And in the same measure as our love extends in an ever wider sphere, will our own life gain in compass and significance: for what we love, we absorb into our own will, into our own being and nature. When we love the Universe, as Buddha does, when our benevolence extends to all that exists, then the Universe belongs to our life, to our own self. This, however, is the *highest affirmation of the will to live*; for thus I not only affirm the will to live, which finds expression in my individual, finite, perishable person, but also that which is realised in the whole infinite fulness of existences, in the infinity of all space and all time.

Buddha's love for the Universe is described in the sacred writings of the Buddhists as follows: "After the meal, on my return from gathering alms, I go into the forest. There I heap together the grass or leaves which happen to be lying there and seat myself upon them, my legs crossed, my body erect, my countenance clothed in

[1] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 342-3. — [2] Matt. v. 6, 9.

watchful thought. Thus I remain, allowing the power of benevolence that fills my mind to extend over one quarter of the world. Likewise over the second, third, and fourth, upwards, downwards, across, in all directions, in all completeness over the whole of all the universe, I allow the power of benevolence that fills my mind to extend, the wide, ample, immeasurable power of benevolence that knows of no hatred and strives after no harm."[1]

With this infinite benevolence is combined the infinite blessedness of Nirvâna, or rather it is identical with it. Bliss, happiness, pleasure arises from the satisfaction of every impulse, of every desire. The will that has attained its object and possesses what it wishes, is at the same time the cause of blessedness. But a will that desires the well-being of the whole world, the impulse to become absorbed in the love of all that exists, is identical with the will of the Eternal and finds its satisfaction in the mere fact of the existence of all life and of the vital impulse inherent in all beings, and is therefore, in accordance with this highest satisfaction, combined with the highest bliss. Thus the will of the sage who is in Nirvâna corresponds to the assertion of the most intense, most highly developed will to live.

Now, once I have absorbed into my will the existence of the whole world, my own individual existence forms only an infinitely tiny portion of that to which my heart is attached. When I die, when my person ceases to exist, I suffer no loss of life, since the life of my particular person constitutes only an infinitesimal fraction of the life of the vast universe. The sage, therefore, knows no fear of death; nor does he feel anger towards those who inflict suffering on him any more than the mother towards the child for whom she lays down her life, even when it has

[1] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 351.

imposed suffering upon her. Oldenberg says of Buddha's disciple: "The sage occupies an eminence which no act of man can reach: he is not angered by the injustice that sinful passion may do him, nor does he suffer under this injustice. The body over which his enemies have power is not his own self. Unconcerned about the actions of others, he allows his benevolence to diffuse itself over evil as well as good men." [1]

Buddha states: "To those who inflict pain upon me and to those who cause me joy, to all I am alike. Affection or hatred I do not know. In joy and sorrow I remain unmoved, in honour and in dishonour. Everywhere I am alike," (namely, equally benevolent and just,) "this is the perfection of my equanimity." [2]

In social intercourse also we count equanimity and benevolence among the attributes of a noble man. When benevolence towards all creatures and equanimity as to personal advantages and disadvantages increase more and more among mankind, the Kingdom of God, as Christ, or Nirvâna, as Buddha calls it, will attain wider and wider influence.

Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ or Saviour, and Gotama of Kapilavatthu, the Buddha or Enlightened One, reached these exalted views only after many inward struggles, of which the accounts of the temptations, which both of them, in their figurative language, communicated to their disciples, give us an indication. Both, at first, had attempted, by means of self-mortification or asceticism to draw near to the highest existence. Both, after severe inward struggles and temptations, recognised and rejected these means as delusive. Both afterwards found the way to salvation, to freedom of mind, to deliverance from the burden of earthly life, to the realisation of the divine

[1] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 350. — [2] Id. p. 350.

in the finite, not by emphasising the sinfulness and imperfection of man, but rather by dwelling on what is perfect in him, by giving every prominence to love, compassion, warm-hearted benevolence, and the joyful self-denial in the devotion to a higher aim. Buddha's attitude towards the Brahmans and penitents is similar to that of Christ towards the Pharisees and towards St. John the Baptist and the latter's disciples. Let us look firstly at the manner of worshipping God prevalent before Christ's time, and attempt to explain the story of His temptation.

The first three evangelists give an account of Christ's temptation, St. Matthew and St. Luke in detail and in fair agreement with each other, St. Mark, on the other hand, only quite briefly. One very remarkable circumstance here is that in the first two Gospels the story of the temptation immediately follows the baptism of Jesus by John; in Luke only the genealogy of Christ is inserted before it. Then in all three the first public appearance of Jesus immediately follows.

Jesus, filled with the deepest longing to draw near to what is eternal, could not but observe, as soon as He had obtained a certain knowledge of the world, that the worldly, superficial aims of the Sadducees as well as the sanctimonious, hypocritical character of the Pharisees, who "strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel,"[1] had no part in that for which His soul longed. But a character like John the Baptist's whose powerful sermon of repentance had drawn many serious-minded people to him in the desert, must have greatly influenced Him. So it was that Jesus who sought eternal salvation with all the strength of His soul, came to John. For Jesus did not yet know that the highest salvation dwelt in His own

[1] Matt. xxiii. 24.

soul, that He only required to grasp it; rather He believed that He had to seek it outside Himself, and thus felt drawn to him who seemed the greatest among His contemporaries, the one who not only had found the right way himself, but who could also teach it to Him and others. Jesus wished to become his disciple; to emulate him seemed the one thing needful. But soon the contrast between Himself and the Baptist awakened in Jesus the consciousness of what dwelt in Himself: just when He seriously attempted to follow in John's footsteps it became clear to Him that the latter's course was a mistaken one.

John the Baptist, as is shown by his whole course of action, was a preacher of repentance. All sinfulness should be rooted out of the heart, all the rough paths that lead to the Lord should be made smooth, all that was crooked should be made straight.[1] The truly just alone would be able to stand before the God of Wrath, all other weak and sinful men would be given over to damnation at the coming Day of Judgment. Only the ascetic, the man who renounced all sinful life, could be called truly just; the worldly life in itself was looked upon as sinful.[2] The Baptist, therefore, and his disciples lived in monastic fashion, apart from all worldly life, seeking righteousness before God in severe mortification of the flesh, in much fasting and prayer. Baptism served them as the symbol of purification from all sin and of the beginning of an entirely new life. As water washes

[1] Luke iii. 4, 5.

[2] The words of the Baptist (Luke iii, 10-14) that point to a compromise, as if also the publican, the soldier, and others who continue their wordly occupations would have been able to stand before God in judgment as long as they should not have been guilty of any injustice or deed of violence, are in reality not the words of the Baptist, but skilfully constructed additions, as is convincingly shown by Paul Wernle in "*Die synoptische Frage*," 1899 pp. 84, 94, 95.

away the impurities of the body, so was baptism to symbolise the moment in which man renounces all sin.

The Baptist himself, like his disciples, and, at first, Jesus also, wished completely to root out all the sinfulness in their hearts by means of a direct struggle against it, by mortifying the flesh, by fasting, solitude, rigid contemplation, unwearying and keen self-examination, continual prayer, and a renunciation of all worldly life, of all worldly thoughts, views, and impulses. But in such a direct struggle against sinfulness it often happens with really free men of genius, as for example with St. Augustin and Luther, that sin raises its head the higher, the more it is directly opposed, just as if it only acquired real strength when an eternal significance is attached to it. The serious-minded, but moderately gifted man will to some extent be able to fancy that by self-mortification he can attain to an approximate sinlessness, perfection, and righteousness before God. The man of genius, however, with his absolute love of truth, in all cases drawing the last conclusions, and leaving no corner unexplored in which falsehood may hide itself, the man of genius with his clear intuition of what is truly perfect, recognises, the more he desires to free himself from all that is sinful, faulty, and imperfect, that sinfulness and imperfection are direct conditions of his finite existence, that they belong indeed to finiteness as such and can in no wise be separated from it. True perfection is the attribute of only one existence, of God, Who alone unites in Himself the whole fulness of real being. Finite existences, on the other hand, being conditioned and limited by one another in their number and diversity, necessarily remain imperfect. Hence even Christ says to him who called Him "Good Master," "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God."[1]

[1] Mark x. 17, 18; Luke xviii. 18, 19.

Now, the more the man of genius, led wrong by the example of less gifted men, attempts to trace and root out all that is sinful in his own heart, the more clearly will he perceive what store of sinfulness lies dormant in its depths, merely awaiting the opportunity to waken and burst forth. With his logical cast of mind the man of genius recognises that in estimating what is sinful it is in the end a matter of indifference whether we have to do with mere predisposition, with mere tendencies, or with deeds. It depends on circumstances alone, on the innate strength of the different dispositions and tendencies and on their relation to one another, on education, on the examples set before one, and on many other things, whether a disposition dormant in human nature shall develop into action or not. The testimony of two of the greatest geniuses among mankind may here be adduced to show that even they, with all their outward uprightness of life, found in the depths of their hearts the possibility of all evil. Shakespeare, who in the figure of Hamlet depicts his own innermost nature, makes the latter say, "I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in." And Goethe said, that "he could imagine all crimes as committed by himself, and looked upon all vices as possible in himself (envy alone excepted): all this was to be embodied in Faust." [1]

When a man striving towards perfection and earnestly attempting to root sin out of his heart, for the first time becomes fully aware how firmly sinfulness is rooted in his earthly being, his initial impression will be that, compared

[1] Hermann Grimm, *Vorlesungen über Goethe*. 5. Auflage, 1894, p. 477.

with others who have by asceticism apparently attained to righteousness before God, he is a wholly depraved, miserable creature doomed to perdition. Only gradually, after severe mental struggles, does the man of genius acquire the conviction that sin is the inheritance of all men, even of the best and highest, because imperfection belongs to what is finite, and only One is perfect, namely, God, the sum of all that constitutes the highest existence. Others who believe they have gained righteousness before God by some action or other, are labouring under a delusion which proves that they have no eyes for the true character of all that is finite and particularly of human nature.

The man of genius, on the other hand, with his keen eye for the imperfections which are a part of all that is finite, recognises both in himself and in others the tendency to perfection, to the highest existence, the tendency that Goethe praises in the man "whoe'er aspired unweariedly."[1] That which is finite cannot be perfect, for God alone is perfect; but for the very reason that the finite being itself cannot lead the highest existence, it endeavours to find this highest existence in God who alone enjoys it. All finite things started from what is infinite, they had their origin in God, God is the Creator of all things, "our Father." Therefore all finite things strive to return again to what is infinite; "the will to live" develops to ever higher and more significant forms, until finally, in the man of genius, it reaches that high stage at which in the finite creature love for the infinite, for the highest life itself becomes revealed in all its strength. But wherever, step by step, higher life develops out of a lower state of existence, the man of genius discovers a striving towards the highest life and joyfully welcomes it as such. Absolute perfection is unattainable for man owing to his subjection

[1] *Faust.* Translated by B. Taylor, Part II, Act V.

to finite conditions, man himself is not God, neither was Christ or Buddha; but that which, in spite of all its sinful tendencies, strives inwardly after an ever higher life, after the highest life, without ever resting or finding its ultimate satisfaction in any finite thing, is of godlike origin, is the divine in the creature-like, is God in man, in Christ, in the "Son of Man," that is, in Him Who regarded Himself as the typical representative of His species.

It is, therefore, no use attempting to remove man's sinfulness and imperfection directly by prayer and fasting, just as little, indeed, as if we tried like the wise men of Schilda or Gotham to remove the darkness from a windowless room by pailfuls or by shovelling it out. Let the darkness remain darkness, but let us make openings by which the light may stream in, and brightness will come by itself. Thus sin in the human heart is most effectually combated by promoting in every way the striving after perfection. Whenever sin is too strongly emphasised, selfishness and the seeking after self-righteousness will dominate. Man does not wish to be indebted for anything, he refuses to recognise the highest state as an attribute of God alone or to admit that his own best endeavours are insufficient. He prefers setting out to conquer real perfection himself, so as to be able to appear before God and say: "Behold, now I am like unto Thee or have at least approached to Thee as nearly as lay in my power. Now I may appear before Thee and demand my rights." The God of the hard, egotistical, and self-righteous man, therefore, is also hard, egotistical, and self-righteous, speaking only in a voice of thunder and demanding of his poor creatures who are innocent of their birth, sinlessness in spite of all the finite and imperfect conditions under which they have come to life. The man of higher nature, however, his own heart filled with

love and mercy, as soon as he is freed from false, ascetical teachings, sees in the highest existence only an all-merciful love. Likewise, to Jesus God is not the severe, avenging judge who mercilessly punishes every fault, but the all-merciful, kindly father who, when his children ask for food, gives them not a stone but bread. A good father trains his children to virtue by teaching them to love what is virtuous, and not by mercilessly and cruelly punishing every shortcoming. He rejoices in his children's good qualities, strives to develop them, and does not at once disown his children, if bad qualities show themselves side by side with the good ones. Much more long-suffering and slow to wrath is the eternal love. Therefore Christ calls God his *Father*, and teaches his disciples to turn to the real author of their being, to the all-embracing, highest existence, in a simple, childlike, and trustful manner: "Our *Father* which art in heaven."

The good, divine element in man is his striving to attain from multiplicity to unity, from discord to harmony, from an egotistical retirement to a loving communion, from inward isolation and hostile seclusion to a complete devotion of the heart to sensations, thoughts, and actions. Schiller says: "If we perceive excellence, it is ours. Let us become intimate with the high, ideal Unity, and we shall be drawn to one another in brotherly love."[1] God is One, God is Unity, and every striving after unity, fellowship, and harmony brings us nearer to Him. And thus it is love, mercy, gentleness, and consideration for others, that Christ himself practises and holds up to his disciples as the chief commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," for "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."[2]

[1] Æsthetical and Philosophical Essays. Newly translated, 1910, p. 390.
[2] Matt. xxii. 39; xii. 7.

At first, however, Jesus believed that He could find salvation with St. John, the ascetic, in the desert. When He was baptised and thought thereby to have attained to a state of sinlessness, perfection, and real goodness, it appeared to Him as if the heavens were opened and the Spirit of God descended upon Him, and as if He heard God Himself testify His pleasure in Him: "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him. And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."[1]

But this ecstasy did not last. For soon after He had begun, according to the example of John the Baptist, to lead in the desert a life of asceticism or self-mortification, in order to become absolutely sinless and "good" like unto God, the process above described had to take place in His mind, and His inspired, divine nature tore itself free from all barren, selfish striving after self-righteousness. He could not but recognise that the way of the Baptist too, and not only that of the Pharisees, was a mistaken one. The possibilities of evil that lie dormant deep within the human heart, make themselves most distinctly felt precisely when they are made the subject of special observation and resistance. At first the plain recognition of the innate imperfection of human nature profoundly humiliated and depressed the mind of Jesus, eager and fervent as He was in the pursuit of absolute righteousness and freedom from sin. He felt as if He were crushed, as if He were banished from the face of God, and given over a prey to the powers of doubt, darkness, and evil of which Satan is the symbolic embodiment.

[1] Mark. i. 9-11.

He could not but look upon the old way as misleading, while the new one still remained to be found.

Here then was the crisis, here the man of genius had to decide on his future course of action. Jesus felt, as it were, the firm ground sway beneath Him; it seemed to Him as if He were lost in the boundless waste of life without support or guidance. Then the first temptation assailed Him. He gave His disciples an account of it in the figurative language peculiar to Him, which Matthew reproduced as follows: "Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."[1]

Jesus had found the life-denying asceticism misleading and barren and life now made its demands upon Him again. He suffered hunger, and now He wished to eat, and no longer to fast; but the will alone was not sufficient to satiate Him. Where the extreme effort of His will had failed to procure for Him absolute freedom from sin, — since "none is good, save one, that is, God," — it now equally failed to procure Him bread where none existed. He wished to eat, but had not a piece of bread to appease His gnawing hunger, to revive His fainting strength. Stones only and nothing but stones surrounded Him as far as the eye could reach. Too clearly, the sacrifice that man offered to God by mortifying the flesh, by repressing his own life, was a most foolish sacrifice, without either purpose, sense, or reason. It was the act of an ordinary man, of one "*born of woman*," as Christ afterwards said

[1] Matt. iv. 1-4.

of John the Baptist, the act of a man of limited mind, who looks on himself, on God, and on the world with eyes darkened by the earthly, unfree striving of women-born creatures, and not with the clear, searching, unprejudiced eye that penetrates beneath the surface of the world of phenomena, with the eye of one "*born of the Spirit*," with the eye of the divinely gifted man, of the man of genius. It is true that, according to the words of Christ, "among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist," for he had been more in earnest than any of his predecessors and contemporaries in his endeavour to gain for himself and others perfect righteousness before God. "Notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven," — he who is still very far from having attained the highest degree of mental freedom, of true unity with God, but is really on the way to it, — "is greater than he,"[1] than John the Baptist.

Asceticism was thus thrown aside and life claimed its rights again, but at the same time the consciousness of entire dependence on the forces of life, on outward things and circumstances, awoke. The further the man of genius, in his attempt to imitate the narrow-minded man, has forced back his yearning for the freest, highest state of being, for the most perfect existence, the more powerfully must his desire manifest itself as soon as it has regained its freedom from the constraint of outward compliance with an unnatural law. The will of the man of genius extends into the region of the unconditioned, the absolute and perfect, it strives after the realisation of the highest ideal, and therefore feels the more strongly the barriers of all that is finite, imperfect, and conditioned. The greatest, most highly developed mind, in its purest, most spiritual endeavour, remains dependent on the sim-

[1] Matt. xi. 11; Luke vii. 28.

plest, most trivial things, and would perish if the body lacked a crust of bread to save it from starving. Life, indeed, has its rights in spite of all sinful tendencies, but it will always be in wretched dependence on all possible trifling incidents. Jesus, directly after he had abandoned John the Baptist's way of salvation, and had begun to rely on his own resources, felt the spring of life welling up within Him in all its fulness and high spiritual significance. All the keener grew His consciousness of His dependence on the little things of life.

This mood, to which every deep-thinking man is subject at the critical period of his life, one of the greatest among men of genius expresses, when he says, "Why so boundless in feeling and why yet so impeded in the power of accomplishment? Why this sweet vivifying of my budding ideas and their dull withering away before men's impotence? That I feel myself so highly exalted and yet dare not say, I am all that I have it in me to be, this, this, is my torment!"

We must suppose a similar feeling to have been present in the mind of Jesus when He once more turned to active life; and since the man of genius regards all things in the light of their general signification, the fact that in the desert He was near dying of hunger, and yet was without the wherewithal to satisfy it, illuminated His whole position for Him. Why must a man of high and weighty endeavour continually find himself confronted by the barriers of the finite? Why is the impulse within him so great and mighty, and why is man outwardly so impotent? Why must he be dependent on a morsel of bread? Why can he not turn stones into bread? Why this dependence on the outward and accidental circumstances of life, when the preservation of the highest spiritual activity is involved? Is not this dependence ignominious, degrad-

ing, unjust? Shall man not revolt against the idea that there is a God, a highest Being, most perfect, free, and creative, since, after all, there seems to be nothing but compulsion, necessity, and dependence? And when all reasonable reflection continually discloses to the man of lofty genius the confines of his existence, his lack of freedom, his nothingness, shall he not do better to throw over all reason and truth in order to seek his freedom, his creative divinity in error, blindness, and lies? When he looks at the world with the eye of reason, he sees law prevailing everywhere, within and without him, and nowhere does he find room left for the free play of his creative will. But when he sets at naught the light of reason, he succeeds in denying the established connection between all phenomena, and at the same time in denying his constant dependence on them. The whole world thus being for him nothing but chaos, he is free to imagine that he himself is the only fixed point round which all things revolve; then he can delude himself into believing that he can absolutely master all things and turn stones into bread. Then he is the egoist of Stirner, the superman and "master" of Nietzsche, who, from his point of view quite consistently looks upon "the devil," the father of lies, as the "oldest friend of knowledge,"[1] and on "error, blindness, lies" as "divine."[2]

Goethe observes on this subject: "Truth is contradictory to our" low, earthly "nature; error is not, and for a very simple reason: truth demands that we should recognise our limitations, whereas error flatters us by making us believe that in one way or another we are not circumscribed at all."[3]

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XII, p. 94.

[2] Id. vol. XIII, p. 197.

[3] *Criticisms, Reflections, and Maxims.* Translated by W. B. Rönnfeldt, p. 179.

The man of true genius overcomes this temptation. He sees too plainly that it serves no purpose to have dealings with the "father of lies," and to seek in wilful blindness and self-delusion a pitifully ridiculous superhumanity, like that of the despot Xerxes who ordered the sea to be scourged for having destroyed his bridge, and who is admired by Nietzsche for causing to be cut in pieces the son of a man who had "expressed a nervous, ominous distrust of the whole campaign" [1] of the king and thus had wounded the vanity and imaginary divinity of the tyrant. The ridiculous sham divinity of Nietzsche's superman and "master" and Stirner's egoist is not to the taste of the true superman, who is really superior to ordinary humanity, not because he fancies he is unconditioned and absolute, like unto God, but because he does not lose his inborn intuition of the highest perfection which is in reality in God alone, and therefore does not, as "those that are born of women," [2] become biassed by anxious care about his own earthly welfare or his heavenly salvation.

But if God alone enjoys the true, free, and creative existence, then one's own highest, free, and creative life can only be found in God. For not only the lower life is concerned, which must be satisfied with bread, but everything too that pertains to the higher and highest needs of man. These, however, he can satisfy only in consistence with the highest reason, with the highest reality and freedom in God. His real life he finds only in Him. Thus man lives, "not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Whoever could, by a miracle, convert stones into bread, would no doubt be able to arrest definite laws of nature; but he would, nevertheless, in mind and spirit, remain bound

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. VI, p. 86. — [2] Luke vii. 28.

by the laws of reason and of the heart, nor could he renounce these laws without destroying his own deeper, spiritual life. All life is based on laws according to which the elements of life join to form ever higher unities. With the dissolution of the established order, life itself would be dissolved; but God is the father, the author of all life, He is a "God of the living,"[1] and "the words that proceed out of His mouth" are words of life, are the eternal laws which He pronounces and on which all natural and spiritual life is based.

Once the man of genius has overcome the temptation to self-delusion and has ceased to take stones for bread or to delude himself into believing that his will suffices to make the impossible possible, once he has learned instead boldly and unwaveringly to look stern reality in the face, the terribly hard necessity, compulsion, and limitation, which all reality carries in its train, will at first appear to overwhelm him. The endless struggle and change, the destructive working of this world, the hostile forces that he meets with on all sides will make him conscious of his own impotence and fill his mind with terror. Goethe describes a similar mood as follows: "It is as if a curtain had been drawn from before my eyes; and, instead of prospects of eternal life, the abyss of an ever open grave yawned before me. Can we say of anything that it exists when all passes away — when time, with the speed of a storm, carries all things onward — and our transitory existence, hurried along by the torrent, is either swallowed up by the waves or dashed against the rocks. There is not a moment but preys upon you, and upon all around you — not a moment in which you do not yourself become a destroyer. The most innocent walk deprives of life thousands of poor insects; one step destroys the fabric

[1] Matt. xxii. 32.

of the industrious ant, and converts a little world into chaos. No; it is not the great and rare calamities of the world, the floods which sweep away whole villages, the earthquakes which swallow up our towns, that affect me. My heart is wasted by the thought of that destructive power which lies concealed in every part of universal nature. Nature has formed nothing that does not consume itself, and every object near it; so that, surrounded by earth and air, and all the active powers, I wander on my way with aching heart, and the universe is to me a fearful monster, for ever devouring its own offspring."[1]

Hence a new temptation approaches Jesus, the temptation to escape by self-destruction from the well-nigh unbearable restraints of temporal being, against which His sublime and mighty will continually revolts. The stronger the will of the man of genius is, the more violent will be the pain, when the huge waves of feeling break against the barriers of reality; and when these barriers prove insurmountable and immovable, the thought of avoiding them by suicide is apt to suggest itself.

It is well known that Goethe, when a young man in Wetzlar, had "serious thoughts of hanging, that deserved hanging;" and he represents Faust as about to take "the last, the solemn way," to escape from the restraint and torment of earthly life. Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Hamlet the expression of his own feelings as a young man, in the celebrated monologue, "To be or not to be," and Napoleon Bonaparte, when a youth, writes in his diary under May 2, 1786: "Always alone, even in the midst of people, I have withdrawn to my room to commune with myself and give free vent to my despondency.

[1] *The Sorrows of Young Werther.* First Book, *August* 18th; in Novels and Tales by Goethe, 1903, p. 289.

Whither do my thoughts turn to-day? To death ... My life is a burden to me, for it holds out no prospect of pleasure, and everything seems to turn into a cause of sorrow because those among whom I live and shall probably always live are utterly unlike myself, as unlike as sunlight to moonlight. I cannot therefore lead the kind of life which alone would make existence bearable, and hence arises endless dissatisfaction with everything."[1]

Moved by similar feelings, the Saviour stands on a pinnacle of the temple, and the tempter whispers to Him: Cast thyself down and make an end of thy torments. If thou art really something apart as thou seemest to feel, then God has need of thee and will do a miracle, manifesting in a moment thy majesty. But if thou art deluded, if the others are right and thou art only a poor fool with all thy paradoxical opinions and peculiar feelings, then wilt thou at least be delivered from all thy soul's doubt and torture.

But although, on the one hand, the man of genius lays uncompromising claim to absolute power and freedom, yet, on the other hand, he consistently recognises the necessary dependence of all earthly events on the limitations of this transitory state. His logical mode of thought leads him to the conviction that the prevailing restriction and dependence of this present existence, the infirmities and frailties of all life, arise from the very fact that this world does not contain the highest, most genuine state of being, but is only a passing reflection of it. Every dependence and lack of freedom, indeed, proves the nothingness of earthly existences. One thing depends upon another, thus they perish as they arise, together. In God alone is

[1] August Fournier, *Napoleon I. A Biography*. Translated by A. E. Adams, 2nd ed., 1912, vol. I, pp. 16, 17.

to be found the true, free, and imperishable existence. The intuition of this highest, real state of being in God and the deep-seated tendency towards it enable the man of genius to rise superior to the misery, torment, and nothingness of earthly life. If the true state of being is to be found in God alone, then all the things of this world possess a mere passing, apparent significance; then it is as profitless to flee as to seek the world, then earthly things and circumstances possess no absolute value at all and should not be taken seriously.

Thus love of the highest state of being in God frees the soul from anxiety about earthly concerns, which arises solely from attaching too great an importance to finite things and circumstances. In the very contemplation of the nothingness and dependence of things, of their origin and extinction according to eternal laws, we become aware of a gradually more exalted striving of all creatures after the highest existence, and find in it our own deepest life and blessedness.[1] Properly considered, all the good things of this world point beyond themselves to a highest good, the *summum bonum*. In this sense God is the "one pearl of great price," which the merchant finds and for which he "sold all that he had." Again, Christ compares this highest existence to a "treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."[2] Therefore the man of genius divests the world of the seemingly absolute value which would otherwise have become a yoke to him, and attributes the

[1] Goethe, *Poetry and Truth*. Revised Translation by M. S. Smith, 1911, vol. II, p. 205: "Such men," like Spinoza, "are convinced of the existence of the Eternal, of the Inevitable, and of Immutable Law, and seek to form for themselves ideas which are imperishable, and which contemplation of the changing world cannot shake, but rather confirms."

[2] Matt. xiii. 44-46.

really absolute value to that highest existence alone the intuition of which he carries within his soul which, since God rules in it, participates in the blessedness of the "kingdom of heaven."

But as this world, in contrast to the undivided, self-existing, free being of God, is characterised by the constant dependence of all things on one another, which thereby remain transitory and imperfect, this world and its nothingness can have no claim to be raised to an absolute and divinely free existence by the fact that God Himself in a direct manner actively interferes in this reality, that He contradicts Himself by recalling the eternal laws, the "words that have proceeded out of his mouth," that He breaks the chain of cause and effect and works miracles. The miracle as the manifestation of freedom from the restraint of established relations, is in contradiction to the constant dependence and nothingness of the world of phenomena. He who demands a miracle demands in fact that the unconditioned existence, namely, God, should directly interfere with the law of causality, with the connection among finite, imperfect things, and should mingle with the purely finite relations of the conditioned world; he demands, therefore, that God and the world should become convertible into each other, that God should become a conditioned part of the world and the world a conditioned part of God, so that neither would continue to exist in its true and real character, but each would cancel the other like plus and minus, and thereby produce an absolute nothingness.

The world in its contrast to God, however, possesses a *relative* nothingness. The finite, thoroughly conditioned existences of this world, feeling the contrast with the infinite, unconditioned, absolute existence of God, are dissatisfied with their own state of being; hence they are

willing to reach beyond themselves, to practise self-denial and, in close union with others, to merge in a higher being. And this higher being will be fused with like beings in a still higher being, and so on. Thus a constant confluence of innumerable single beings into uniform, harmonious, higher forms of being takes place, an uninterrupted transition from multiplicity to unity, from relative nothingness to an ever higher fulness of existence; so that the world, if it does not represent the divine existence itself, yet shows a constant striving towards it, and thus at least indicates the direction in which the highest state of being is to be found. The way thither is therefore marked by love, by the sympathy, harmony, and agreement by which the many become one, by the idea through which multiplicity is combined into unity, by all that is beautiful, true, and good in the widest sense of these words.

Hence it is that Jesus does not wish to see the highest state of being in God debased, profaned, or destroyed by any direct intermingling with the finite, conditioned beings, that is, by the performance of miracles. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign."[1] And therefore, on the pinnacle of the temple, Jesus turns away from Satan and the temptation to invoke a direct interposition of God: "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the Temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."[2]

But the second temptation is immediately succeeded

[1] Matt. xii. 39. — [2] Matt. iv. 5-7.

by the third. When the man of genius has banished the thought of death, when in the contemplation of the immutable laws of nature, of the inevitable interdependence of all creatures, he has arrived at the recognition, on the one hand, of the nothingness of all individual beings, and, on the other hand, of their aspiration towards God in combining to form ever higher unities, then does his soul, with its deep craving for the unconditioned, true existence, acquire full inward freedom as to the relative nothingness of all earthly doings. His soul casts aside all care and knows no longer either hope or fear. As, after all, the success of every effort is limited by accidental outward circumstances, as we remain unfree in all that relates to the world, and dependent on conditions over which we never have any complete control, we have no need to be anxiously concerned about the success of our endeavours. The greatest care may be rendered futile by an accident, that is, by some circumstance we are unable to foresee. Nay, indeed, he who faces things too timidly loses his free, unbiassed power of observation and in his anxiety about the issue commits the most serious errors and brings failure upon himself, while a man of cooler courage, who, without hope and fear, calmly looks things in the face, succeeds in his venture. The man of genius, therefore, who has once and for all closed his account with life, renounces all earthly things from the outset and rises superior to care and death, to success and failure. His activity can, therefore, result in the boldest, freest deeds, that is, deeds wholly regulated by his own ideas, and thus he attains happiness in his very striving after the highest aims, without allowing his true satisfaction to be dependent on ultimate success. For success will always be a matter of accident, that is, it will depend on the complicated co-

operation of the most various circumstances which even the greatest talents and the most strenuous exertions do not enable us to control. In all that regards the outer world we remain at bottom wholly unfree:

"Our wills and fates do so contrary run,
That our devices still are overthown,
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own." [1]

But by renouncing outward freedom, and achievement of success as an absolute condition of action, the man of genius acquires inner freedom: inwardly he detaches himself from all that is finite by recognising its futility, its narrowness, and its limitations, and thus turns his heart to what is eternal. Consequently that which is finite ceases to have absolute importance for him. About what he solely and truly values, either in his feelings alone, or with full and clear consciousness, namely, about the eternal existence, he has no need whatever to worry, for what is eternal can never be exposed to any danger, and in the eternal existence he himself finds his everlasting home, whatever may befall him here in this transitory world. In how far the eternal idea realises itself here on earth depends on outward circumstances, on conditions the complicated co-operation of which cannot be calculated by the human mind, and the question has no connection with the permanence of the eternal existence itself. "All transitory things are sent but as symbols."

This free mental attitude towards the whole world, this profound repose in the depths of his soul, the accompanying faculty of entirely unbiassed observation which penetrates into the inner nature of things and invariably grasps that which is essential, together with extraordinary boldness and energy of action, enable the

[1] Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act III, Sc. ii.

man of genius to exercise supreme power. Thus, since after all this life is to be lived, the temptation to part with life is immediately succeeded by the temptation to live on a grand scale, as a conqueror and ruler of the world. He who neither fears nor hopes for himself is feared by others and on him their hopes are fixed. He who himself remains unmoved in his innermost being, sets everything around him in motion, and he to whom the whole world appears worthless and hollow will be disposed to handle it as if it were his sport. The path of a man of extraordinarily great talents who in his soul detaches himself from all outward influences, is like unto the path of a tempest.

But outward command over men can only be obtained by outward means, by cunning and violence. Whoever would conquer this world must call to his aid the "prince of this world," Satan, the symbolic embodiment of evil and destruction, and all ways and means, whether good or evil, must be welcome to him. Here is the juncture at which the saviour of the world parts from the conqueror of the world. The latter seeks a substitute for the highest, eternal state of being, the intuition of which lives in his soul, in the greatest possible fulness of outward power; whereas the saviour of the world cannot be satisfied with any substitute, but aims straight at what is eternal, be it called the Kingdom of Heaven, or Nirvâna. The saviour and the conqueror of the world are alike in their striving after the highest, eternal state of being, a striving that, on earth, can never lead to the goal, since here there is no highest, eternal state of being. For this very reason the conqueror of the world is not really concerned about the ultimate success of his grand, bold plans and efforts; his joy is rather in his intense, prodigious activity itself, in the strife and struggle for high aims. It is for him a game, sport on a grand scale. The greatest

success, the widest extent of power can never satisfy him, for they will ever remain but suggestions of a yet higher power, a still greater completeness of being. Plutarch relates of the youth Alexander: "Whenever he heard Philip had taken any town of importance, or won any signal victory, instead of rejoicing at it altogether, he would tell his companions that his father would anticipate everything, and leave him and them no opportunities of performing great and illustrious actions. For being more bent upon action and glory than either upon pleasure or riches, he esteemed all that he should receive from his father as a diminution and prevention of his own future achievements; and would have chosen rather to succeed to a kingdom involved in troubles and wars, which would have afforded him frequent exercise of his courage, and a large field of honour, than to one already flourishing and settled, where his inheritance would be an inactive life, and the mere enjoyment of wealth and luxury."[1]

Johann Freinsheim remarks: "At an early age Alexander already gave evidence of a mind fixed on what is great and exalted. There was no limit to his desire for action. His ambition set itself the highest aims. The numerous conquests of his father affected him with sadness at the thought that he would be anticipated in all that was best worth doing; for it was not possession that stimulated him, but the dangers of acquisition."[2]

But power can only be acquired and maintained by force and violence. The aid of the Evil One cannot be dispensed with in conquering the world. This temptation too assails Jesus at the turning-point of His life, the temptation to gain power, not by means of the Spirit, but by

[1] *Lives. The "Dryden Plutarch,"* revised by A. H. Clough, 1912, vol. II, p. 466.

[2] *Des Quintus Curtius Rufus Geschichte Alexanders des Großen.* Bearbeitet von H. W. Reich, 1895, p. 3.

that of violence. "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."[1] Christ renounced the companionship and aid of the Evil One. The Saviour's soul was too free, too much filled with the clear vision of the absolute perfection in God, to find satisfaction in the restless gambling for the highest earthly stakes. This temptation too He casts from Him, and turns immediately to the service of the Most High, to found, instead of a kingdom of the world, a kingdom of God, a "kingdom of heaven" on earth; to show their real treasure to all who have eyes to see and ears to hear and to help them to cast off the fear and trouble caused by earthly things and feel themselves the children of their eternal Father. Men, "born of the Spirit," attain to freedom from the torment of this world by letting their souls be filled with the highest good, the "one thing needful," so that, permeated by a longing for the highest perfection, they may behold the striving after the Eternal in all that is finite, and, upheld by an unrestrained love for all that is beautiful, true, and good, they may embody the Divine in the Human, God in "the Son of Man."

In St. Matthew's Gospel the history of Jesus shows the three temptations characteristic of genius in the right sequence; in St. Luke's Gospel this order of succession is altered in so far as the temptation to self-deception and to a false superhumanity is immediately succeeded by the temptation to the genuine worldly superhumanity of the

[1] Matt. iv. 8-10.

conqueror and ruler, whereas in contrast with a natural mental development the temptation to self-destruction occupies the third place. Goethe, quite logically, makes Faust, the superman, after overcoming the temptation to suicide, detach himself from all by which he had hitherto been inwardly bound, and then lets him outwardly display a demonic activity by calling in the aid of the destructive power of the Evil One. This most characteristic feature in Goethes "Faust" cannot be the product of art alone, but must be the result of experience and is found only in an exceptionally great man.

The authors of the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke have more or less faithfully reproduced the acts and words of Jesus transmitted to them, supplying them with various additions, but they have failed to understand the relations between the Saviour and the Baptist, the severe inward struggle of Jesus in the desert, and the story of the temptation connected with it, which the Saviour Himself communicated to His disciples; for the personal religious tendency of the authors of these Gospels is in contradiction to all this. For this reason it cannot be assumed that the more accurately worked out story of the temptation has been merely invented by the authors of the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke with the distinct purpose of supporting their religious conception of the person and doctrine of Jesus, and that the Gospel of St. Mark is the more original one for the reason, too, that it does not contain this more detailed account, but simply confines itself to the brief statement: "And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him."[1]

[1] i. 12, 13.

After Jesus had inwardly cut Himself adrift from John the Baptist and risen superior to the latter's ascetic view of life, He had no further use for the symbol of this view of life, for the ascetic baptism of St. John. This baptism, like the fasting of the Pharisees and of John's disciples, had now in Christ's eyes become a mere exploded formula, an old bottle into which no man putteth new wine, a worn-out garment unto which no man putteth a piece of a new cloth.[1] Christ, therefore, neither baptised anyone Himself, nor did He ever instruct His disciples to baptise. The command to baptism in St. Matthew's Gospel[2] is a later addition. The passage in St. Mark, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,"[3] is quite apocryphal. St. Luke contains no instructions at all concerning baptism. And St. John's Gospel which mentions Jesus Himself as baptising,[4] while in the following chapter it corrects itself and confines the act only to the disciples,[5] must be entirely rejected as historical material for the life and the true doctrine of Jesus. Only one passage in St. John's Gospel is genuine, that treating of the adulteress,[6] which has found its place in this Gospel merely by accident. With respect to the question of the period at which the passage containing the command to baptise was written and of the historical value of St. John's Gospel, modern theological works may be compared.

Evidently Jesus did not expressly forbid baptism. He considered it sufficient to define His attitude towards baptism by not making use of it, as He also, for instance, desisted from the ritual washing of hands before eating, referring to it explicitly only when opponents took offence at its omission and openly blamed Him or His disciples on that account. As the single immersion,

[1] Matt. ix. 16, 17. — [2] xxviii. 19. — [3] xvi. 16. — [4] iii. 22. — [5] iv. 2. — [6] viii. 1-11.

with the peculiar significance attached to it, was only practised by John the Baptist and his disciples, Jesus later had no particular occasion to take a definite attitude towards it. Instead, he had been forced into the most pronounced opposition to the "tradition" of the scribes and Pharisees and to their "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men"[1] as well as to the whole sacrificial service by which "the house of prayer," the Temple, had been made "a den of thieves."[2] Therefore both His polemics and the act that gave the last decisive turn to His fate, namely, the cleansing of the Temple, were but steps in this direction.

Only once does a very characteristic and significant opportunity of mentioning John's baptism occur to Christ, namely, when, having driven the money-changers and merchants connected with the sacrificial service from the court of the Temple, He was taken to task for so doing and asked, "By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?" Jesus answered with a counter-question: "I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or from men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things."[3] The reasoning of the "chief priests, scribes and elders" is of course only supposition on the part of the author of the original collection of Christ's words on which the three synoptical Gospels are based. The only actual fact is that they had

[1] Matt. xv. 1-9. — [2] Matt. xxi. 13. — [3] Matt. xxi. 23-27.

no answer to give to the Saviour's question, and that consequently He also refused to answer theirs.

The explanation of this extremely significant passage is this. Jesus was a man who, in consistence with His extraordinary genius, never halted half way, but always drew final conclusions. When He was addressed as "good master," He at once took the word "good" in the sense of absolutely pure and perfect goodness, and therefore declined it for Himself because He considered it applicable to God alone. In the same way He understood the enquiry concerning His authority as at the same time raising the question of His whole mental development, and therefore also the question of His connection with John the Baptist; for on His mental development depended, as a matter of course, also the consciousness of the authority by which He acted, the consciousness of His divine "heavenly" mission. John the Baptist had been the only one of His contemporaries whom He could take seriously, and even as, in His whole conception of God and life, He felt himself in opposition to the Baptist, so He was conscious of the contrast of His own "heavenly" mission with the significance of John's baptism, which was based only on the act of man and upon ordinary human opinion. To Jesus Himself His connection with the Baptist had been of the greatest moment, for it was precisely the contrast with this most earnest man, the greatest "among them that are *born of women*," that had led to the development of the divine powers latent in Jesus, and had awakened His consciousness of the superhuman power of reflection within Him which was *born of the Spirit*.

Jesus was indeed quite willing to reply fully to the enquiry as to His authority, but only to those who were capable of understanding the mental processes connected

with it. "To cast pearls before swine" was not to His taste. He had expressly warned His disciples against doing so; for it serves no purpose to reveal one's innermost thoughts to foolish and evil-minded persons, who misunderstand everything and distort the words of wisdom confided to them. Hence before answering His questioners, Jesus wished to make sure whether John the Baptist's appearance as a preacher of repentance, which had been of such vital importance to Him, had made upon them any deeper impression, leading them to take up some definite attitude towards the striking and highly characteristic individuality of the Baptist. This would have formed a starting-point for, or an introduction to, what Jesus had to say concerning His authority. They could, however, answer the question touching the vital nature of the Baptist's preaching neither in the affirmative nor in the negative, thereby sufficiently revealing their own superficiality and vacuity, and thus it was no use for Jesus to continue the discussion.

His answer to the question as to whether the baptism of John was from heaven or of men, could, in accordance with His whole development, only be "of men;" for how could Jesus have declared the baptism of him whom He so emphatically designated as "one born of woman," as a baptism "from heaven?" For "he that is *least* in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he," than John the Baptist.

The Spirit, the Holy Ghost, was in Jesus' language a word of the feminine gender: רוּחַ אֱלֹהִין קַדִּישִׁין;[1] therefore He could compare ordinary, mentally blind men who were born only of women, that is, of ordinary, earthly women, with the inspired, clear-sighted men who were born of the Heavenly Woman, namely, of the Spirit of God, of the

[1] Daniel iv. 5, 6 or 8, 9; cp. Hosea ix. 7: אִישׁ הָרוּחַ, "the spiritual man."

Holy Ghost, of the רוּחַ אֱלֹהִין קַדִּישִׁין, and who consequently were of the Kingdom of Heaven.

But the Saviour's disciples too had no clear insight into His mental development. The knowledge that Jesus had been baptised Himself was sufficient to make them draw the conclusion that baptism was absolutely necessary for all Jesus' disciples. With St. Paul, however, who without opposition accepted the more and more generally adopted practice of baptism, the Baptist's ascetic conception, based on justification by works and on self-righteousness, had no longer any weight. St. Paul was rather inclined to attach a new significance to baptism; to him it was the symbol of the tragic purification produced in the disciples by the Master's death. The immersion means to St. Paul that for love of Christ the disciple has sunk beneath the waters of death with the Master, and on emerging no longer lives his own life, but that of the Christ Who has now arisen in his heart.

But along with the great apostle's profound conception, which had its origin in his own noble and unselfish heart, John's gloomy, ascetic views, emanating from a more selfish, narrow mind, have constantly received recognition in the Christian Church. This contrast has also found expression in the Reformation, and the mental struggles that Luther passed through in his cell were fundamentally caused by the same spiritual experience as that of Jesus when He became alive to the divergencies between Himself and the Baptist.

This contrast asserts itself with men of religious mind in their attitude towards sin in their own hearts, as well as towards the sins of their fellow-beings. He who is selfishly occupied only with the attainment of his own heavenly bliss and his escape from eternal perdition, if need be at the cost of the severest asceticism, and who,

therefore, cannot conceive of God except as of a selfish Being Who gives way to wrath, when His commands are violated, and is to be conciliated only by the deepest abasement and the most rigorous self-castigation even to the extent of impairing or destroying the life of the sinner, this man will be inexorable in religious matters towards his fellow-men also and impose the hardest yoke and the heaviest burden upon them.

The man of profounder nature, who comes under the ban of this rigid, ascetic view of God and life, and is thoroughly in earnest about the extirpation of all that is sinful in his heart and about the renunciation of all life, must fall into a state of despair, like St. Augustin and Luther at a certain period of their development; for the clear-sighted man of genius will soon recognise the impossibility of extirpating all that is sinful in his heart. But the man of more superficial character is from the outset deterred from earnestly recognising and fulfilling the moral claim. He will rather seek for palliatives and sedatives, and will, in fact, find them in outward practices and symbols that are to have some sort of magic effect and in some inexplicable way conciliate God as you would an evil fetish. His own moral acts appear to him from the very outset so insignificant, so infinitely small compared with the overwhelming demand for complete sanctity and righteousness before God, that for the pacification of his anxious mind all sorts of outward acts are invented to do duty for moral perfection and in some marvellous way to act as its substitute. Thus the honest and profound mind becomes confused and paralysed by the ascetic view, while the man of more shallow disposition is led to compromise with the moral claim by using purely outward means and, for the rest, to live exactly as it suits him.

But Jesus truly says that *His* yoke is easy and *His* burden light. Whereas John the Baptist preached an avenging God whose judgment only he can escape who satisfies all the claims of a righteous God, Jesus knows that the Father in heaven in His all-mercifulness, will pardon His children when they offend against Him, and therefore Jesus unconditionally holds out to men the forgiveness of sins; they need offer nothing in return, they need accomplish nothing to obtain it; with the perfect, infinite goodness of God, the heavenly Father, it is a matter of course. When the man sick of the palsy is brought to Jesus, the latter addresses him with the words, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee."[1] And to the woman taken in adultery Jesus says: "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."[2] What is right is to be done not from fear of an angry God, but freely, from heartfelt love of God and one's neighbour. Man need no longer be consumed by selfish fear for his heavenly welfare and need no longer despair or have recourse to magic means, but can now act freely and joyfully, without thinking of himself. Jesus the great friend of life, conceived of God as of the God of the living and not of the dead, Who desires not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live. Yet for a right repentance and a just life, forgiving and compassionate love is requisite. "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing,"[3] says St. Paul.

Jesus, the great friend of life, saw that the life of men was also oppressed by the sacrificial service in the Temple.

[1] Matt. ix. 2. — [2] John viii. 10, 11. — [3] 1. Corinth. xiii. 3.

But the life of men is of much more importance than the keeping of the Sabbath or the sacrifical service in the Temple. Accordingly Christ referred to the words of Hosea," I desired mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings;"[1] and at last, by the symbolic act of overthrowing "the tables of the money-changers and the seats of them that sold doves,"[2] Christ protested against the system of robbery which drained the blood of the people for the sake of a barren sacrificial cult and Temple worship. At the tables of the money-changers, which stood a considerable distance beyond the outer court of the Temple, the common profane coins which were prohibited as sacrificial gifts in the Temple, were changed for those of silver, coined expressly for this purpose; and at the seats of those who sold doves, the poor man bought one with his last penny for the purpose of having it offered as a sacrifice in the Temple. The tables of the money-changers and the seats of the sellers of doves were, therefore, a part of the sacrificial system, and were necessary for those who desired to offer gifts to the Temple, but had not already provided themselves with anything suitable. When Christ overthrew the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves, with the words: "It is written, my House shall be called a House of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves," He, the friend of Life, protested, by this most significant, extraordinary action, in the strongest and most eloquent way possible, against that life-repressing system which plundered the whole nation for the benefit of the barren Temple cult, for the benefit of the High-priests and all their adherents. "It is written," said Christ, "my House shall be called a House of Prayer," — in order to lift up

[1] Hosea vi. 6; cp. Matt. xii. 1-7. — [2] Matt. xxi. 12, 13.

the soul in prayer to God, no such enormous expenditure that devours the revenues of a whole nation is necessary — "but ye have made it a den of *thieves*," in that, for the sake of this enormous expenditure, and for your own personal profit, ye have consumed the very marrow of the people; and ye have robbed the poor man of even his last farthing in exchange for a sacrificial dove, though the Lord God through the mouth of His prophet Hosea has said, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." Nay, even the simplest and most natural demands of humanity which, as such, are at the same time the very will of God, made known by Moses in the Ten Commandments, ye have entirely perverted, for the sake of this immense, useless expenditure in the Temple. For God said through the mouth of Moses, "Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; making the word of God of none effect through your tradition."[1]

The Saviour's highly energetic protest against the extremely numerous offerings that flowed into the Temple, from all parts of the country and from distant foreign lands, touched the authorities of the Temple where they were most sensitive, for it threatened to diminish their revenue, nay, even to abolish it altogether. Is it a wonder then, that, as an immediate consequence of the cleansing of the Temple, they set themselves against Jesus with all their might, and exerted all their powerful influence to bring about the destruction of this dangerous innovator as swiftly as possible? "And the scribes and

[1] Mark vii. 10.

chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him, for they feared him."[1] His most urgent and severe protest against the useless, barren, and life-repressing sacrificial service was the real cause of His being swiftly sentenced to death.

The trial through which He was put was only a form. The rulers who felt their money interests threatened, sought, by all the means in their power, to convict Him of a crime deserving of death; and they found it in the alleged blasphemy by which Jesus, in accordance with His teaching, designated Himself at once as the Son of God and as the Son of Man. The Saviour, namely, characterises supreme human bliss as a deification whereby man becomes one with God, with the words, "ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."[2] That is to say, true humanity rises to godlike sublimity and it is God Himself in man, born of the Spirit, Who loves Himself; just as the son proceeding from the father, loves his own being in the father. Compare the words of Meister Eckehart, "This is the reason that God loves *Himself* in the soul. Though God is in all beings, He still remains with Himself. Being with Himself, he exists for Himself. Therefore existing in all beings, he exists for Himself. Therefore he loves Himself, through Himself, in all beings."[3] Spinoza expresses Himself similarly: "The intellectual love of the mind towards God is the very love with which He loves Himself, not in so far as He is infinite, but in so far as He can be manifested through the essence of the human

[1] Mark xi. 18. — [2] Mark xiv. 62; cp. Daniel vii. 13 and Psalms CX. 1.

[3] *Schriften und Predigten.* Aus dem Mittelhochdeutschen übersetzt und herausgegeben von Hermann Büttner, 1903-09, Bd. I, p. 89: "Hierauf beruht es auch, daß in der Seele sich Gott *selber* liebt. Indem Gott in allen Wesen ist, bleibt er doch bei sich. Indem er bei sich ist, ist er für sich. Darum ist er, indem er in allen Wesen ist, eben damit für sich selber. Darum liebt er *selber* sich, mittels seiner selbst, in allen Wesen!"

mind, considered under the form of eternity; that is to say, the intellectual love of the mind towards God is part of the infinite love with which God loves Himself."[1]

With Buddha, too, it was his impulse towards the unconditioned, absolutely perfect state of existence that led him to renounce everything subject to limitation and change and to seek the way to the only true salvation. Old age, disease, and death showed him the frailty and nothingness of life; but he himself sought the eternal, imperishable existence, since all that is perishable is devoid of freedom and ultimately leads only to suffering, trouble, misery, and despair. Young and of high rank, he nevertheless left his riches, his palaces, his gardens, his parents, his wife and new-born son to assume the yellow garment of an Indian mendicant and to seek instruction in the way of attaining peace of mind, inner freedom, and resignation, from the saints and ascetics. "When Gotama left home to lead a religious life he was, according to trustworthy tradition, twenty-nine years old;"[2] and we read in a passage of the sacred writings: "The ascetic Gotama, young, in youthful years, in the prime of youthful vigour, in the first bloom of life, is gone from his home into homelessness. The ascetic Gotama, though his parents did not wish it, though they shed tears and wept, has had his hair and beard shorn, has put on yellow garments, and has gone from his home into homelessness."[3]

Seven years are then said to have passed till he attained his goal. "In succession he trusted himself to the guidance of two spiritual teachers, so as to find what was termed in

[1] *Ethic*, 1910, p. 276. "Mentis Amor intellectualis erga Deum est ipse Dei Amor, quo Deus se ipsum amat, non quatenus infinitus est; sed quatenus per essentiam humanae Mentis, sub specie aeternitatis consideratam, explicari potest, hoc est, Mentis erga Deum Amor intellectualis pars est infiniti amoris, quo Deus se ipsum amat."

[2] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 124. — [3] Id. p. 125-6.

the language of that time the 'highest state of sublime repose, the unoriginated, Nirvâna, the eternal state,'"[1] but his teachers were unable to teach him what he sought. Then Gotama is reputed to have lived for years in rigorous self-mortification; but even in the most extreme stages of asceticism he failed to find the inner perfection of his being. Therefore Gotama, like Jesus, abandoned asceticism; he had recognised that the way others had gone had only led them astray, and then he himself set to work to find the true path to Eternity. He also, at this important turn of his life, was assailed by doubt, by temptation in the shape of the Evil One, of Mâra, the destroyer, the slayer. But Buddha also overcame temptation and found in complete renunciation of all selfish desire the way to the cessation of suffering and the only approach to the perfection and unconditionality of Nirvâna, of the highest state of life.

The story of Buddha's temptation gives no evidence of that interesting and psychologically true course that we see in the temptation of Jesus, as related in the Gospel of St. Matthew. Yet the characteristic features in the temptation of Buddha are preserved. One of them consists in the temptation to which the man of genius is exposed when he recognises the lack of freedom and the futility of all endeavour in consideration of the extreme uncertainty of ultimate success, namely, the temptation to employ his great gifts in playing for the highest stakes of earthly life, without any care about the final issue. When Gotama was about to go from his home into homelessness, and to cast behind him everything by which a man is bound, and which can cause him anxiety about the ultimate issue, "there appeared to him," according to Gustav Diercks' rendering of the Buddhistic ac-

[1] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 127.

count, "the tempter, Mâra, the devil, and offered him the sovereignty of the world, if he would consent to become king and to renounce his resolution of assuming the mendicant's garment."[1] A Buddhistic myth then transfers this feature to the birth of Gotama, and makes the diviners declare of the new-born child: "If he chooses a worldly life, he will become ruler of the world, if he renounces the world, he will become Buddha, the saviour of the world."[2]

But perhaps the preceding account of the temptation of Gotama immediately after he had left his home is already based on an antedating of that temptation from a still later period, which, in analogy to the temptation of Jesus, should have found its proper place after the abandonment of false teachings and after the renunciation of asceticism as a way to sinlessness. And indeed in an account that, according to Ernst Windisch, "represents an oldest type of the Mâra-legend,"[3] the temptation to worldly rule assails Gotama when he had already passed the stage of asceticism, with the special feature that the thought occurs to Buddha whether he might not perhaps be able to wield worldly sway without using violent means. "At one time the Saint dwelt among the Kosalas, near Himavant, in a hut in the forest. There, having retired into solitude and being engaged in contemplation, the following thought occurred to the mind of the Saint. 'Is it perhaps possible to rule as a king without killing, without ordering others to kill, without oppressing, without ordering others to oppress, without feeling grief, without causing grief, with the doctrine of salvation alone?' When Mâra, the Evil One, perceived the thought in the mind of the Saint, he went to where the Saint was; having gone thither,

[1] *Entwicklungsgeschichte des Geistes der Menschheit*, 1881-82, Bd. I, p. 185. — [2] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 100. — [3] *Māra and Buddha*, 1895, p. 206.

he thus spoke to the Saint, 'The Saint shall reign as a king, the Blessed One shall reign as a king, without killing, without ordering others to kill, without oppressing, without ordering others to oppress, without feeling grief, without causing grief, with the doctrine of salvation."

The temptation to self-deception, of which there is already a suggestion here, is then, immediately after, indicated, in quite a characteristic form, by the subsequent words of Mâra in answer to Buddha's question: "What dost thou intend, O Evil One, by speaking thus to me, 'The Saint shall reign as a king, the Blessed One shall reign as a king, without killing, without ordering others to kill, &c?" Mâra, namely, referring to the fact that only by means of a supernatural miracle, such a holy kingship could be made possible, since, in the natural course of things, temporal dominion can only be permanently upheld by the exercise of force or the threat of violence, by penalty of death, or by oppression, answers: "The Holy One, hail to thee! has developed, unfolded, set in motion, realised, practised, accustomed himself to, duly applied the four elements of miraculous power. And if he so desired, the Saint could direct his power to the king of mountains, Himavant, to turn it into gold, and the mountain would become gold."[1] This might be supplemented by the following addition to Mâra's words: "And with such a great mountain of gold the Saint could make all men happy, so that they would be wholly satisfied, and then the Saint could, in fact, reign as a king, without killing, without ordering others to kill, &c."

As we see, the temptation to self-deception in the words of Mâra entirely corresponds to that presented in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, a temptation to

[1] *Māra and Buddha*, pp. 107-8.

the use of the false power of magic by which, in imagination, one interferes with the rational, established order of things, so as to attain a sham freedom in the sense of the false superhumanity of Anaxarchus, Stirner, and Nietzsche. Christ is to turn stones into bread by His command, Buddha is to convert a mountain into gold by his miraculous power. In both cases the established order of things is to be overthrown to the satisfaction of selfish caprice.

Buddha, as well as Christ, rejects this imaginary creative freedom. Windisch makes Buddha answer, "that, if he wished, he could by his miraculous power change Himalaya into gold,"[1] yet I do not know from which passage of the sacred writings Windisch has taken this utterance of the Saint's. Buddha's answer, quoted by Windisch himself, is as follows:

"If there were a mountain consisting all of glittering gold,
not for one would such wealth be sufficient
knowing this, let man direct his life!
He who has seen where suffering has its source,
how could such a man indulge in delights?
If in the inclination of the heart he has
recognised the root of being in the world,
man will learn to extirpate it!"[2]

It does not follow from this that Buddha feels confident of being able to perform a miracle of this kind, but only that he points to its entire uselessness. Even if there were a mountain all of gold, the covetousness of not even a single man could be fully satisfied with it. Here we miss the crowning words of Christ, "Man shall not live by bread alone," — nor by what he can buy with gold —,

[1] *Māra and Buddha*, p. 206. — [2] Id. p. 108.

"but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Whoever disowns the rational, established connection on which all earthly existences are founded, disowns his own deeper life too, because it likewise rests on eternal laws.

Another characteristic feature in the temptations of Buddha is found in the fact that, when, left to his own resources, in a state of self-dependence, he had attained to inner freedom, Mâra, the Evil One, approached him with the summons: "Enter now into Nirvâna, Exalted One; enter into Nirvâna, Accomplished One; now the time of Nirvâna has come for the Exalted One."[1] Here Nirvâna is the "eternal abode" beyond this life, and here is found an allusion to that temptation to self-destruction to which the man of genius is exposed when his will, strained to the utmost, breaks against the barriers of the Finite.

In this essay, above all, the deeper, essential elements in the doctrines of Buddha and Christ, and at the same time their mutual agreement have been pointed out. In a larger work, in which a more detailed exposition will be given of that which is here frequently only hinted at, the attempt will be made to explain also the difference between the doctrines of Buddha and Christ, a difference which to a great extent has its origin in the character of the two nations from which these two supreme men of genius arose.

[1] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 139; Windisch, *Māra and Buddha*, p. 201.

XI.

TEMPORAL SUPERHUMANITY IN ALEXANDER, CÆSAR, AND NAPOLEON

THE relationship between the Saviour and the conqueror of the world, which was pointed out in the preceding chapter,[1] will appear very strange to those who cannot imagine that the mainspring of lives characterised by such a display of power and so replete with deeds of violence as those led by these great conquerors was not selfishness of the most terrible and boundless description. To the purely superficial observer of things it will indeed appear to be selfishness; he only sees that these men, these geniuses of action, carried out their purposes with the utmost disregard of others, and that their whole energy was directed to the attainment of the highest pinnacle of power. On a closer examination of the development of these men of might and a more careful study of their minds, it will be found that, on the one hand, they showed the keenest insight into the real condition of affairs, but that, on the other hand, they lived entirely in a world of ideas, and in the boldest manner threw themselves into the struggle for the realisation of these ideas, to which they were entirely devoted, and it will be recognised that the idea which contends in their innermost souls most strongly for expression was that of the highest,

[1] Cp. pp. 251-4.

the most perfect state of existence. Carl Bleibtreu, speaking of Napoleon, observes, "Genius is nothing but a clearer consciousness of the Infinite."[1] But it is by no means essential that these great men should clearly recognise this truth. Nay, since their ideas were always closely connected with actualities from the accurate observation of which sprang both the first impulse and the subsequent incentive to the development of their views, they are repulsed by all merely fantastic ideas, ideas which are devoid of any real foundation and may rightly be described as purely imaginative.

Goethe, with special reference to Napoleon, makes the following very subtle and profound statements: "Of the Absolute in the theoretical sense I will not venture to speak; yet this I may maintain: that he who recognises it in its manifestations and ever keeps his gaze directed towards it, will derive very great reward therefrom.

"To live in the Idea means treating the impossible as though it were possible. The same thing applies to Character: if both an Idea and a Character come together, they give rise to events which fill the world with amazement for thousands of years.

"Napoleon, who lived altogether in the Idea, was nevertheless unable to consciously grasp it; he utterly disavowed all ideals and denied them the smallest particle of reality, the while he was zealously striving to realise them. But his clear and incorruptible intellect could not endure such a perpetual inner conflict; and it is very interesting to note the peculiar and charming manner in which, under compulsion, as it were, he expresses his views upon it.

"He considered the Idea as a thing of the mind which has no actual reality, but which, when it vanishes, leaves behind it a residuum (*caput mortuum*) to which we cannot

[1] *Der Imperator* (*Napoleon 1814*), 2. Auflage, 1893, p. 376.

altogether deny some measure of reality. This may to us appear a decidedly perverse and material view; yet he expressed himself quite differently when entertaining his friends, in entire belief and confidence, with the never-ceasing consequences of his life and actions. Then, indeed, he readily admitted that life produces life, and that a fruitful act is effective for all time. He was glad to acknowledge that he had given a fresh impulse, a new direction, to the course of the world." [1]

"It will always remain a most remarkable fact that people whose personality is almost entirely idea are so extremely averse to the fantastic."

Bleibtreu, with reference to Napoleon, speaks of the "universality and grandeur" of genius. He says: "All things small and petty the mind inspired by genius thrusts aside, to turn to the wide and lofty spheres of contemplation. In this sense genius is ever 'idealistic' . . . And thus Napoleon was fundamentally the most intense 'idealist.' He lived and moved only in the realm of great political ideas that he strove to realise." [2]

Men whose thoughts do not reach far, and who cannot grasp the universal, typical relations between existing things, consider it impossible that the essence of genius should consist in disinterested love, in complete devotion to æsthetic sensation, to philosophic thought, or to creative action, in complete devotion to ideas which the man of genius strives to realise in the realm of art, philosophy, public affairs, or religion. This close attachment to his great ideas is, indeed, also the special characteristic of the conqueror of the world, which imparts to him the "demonic" feature so inexplicable to ordinary men. In contrast with his conception of an absolute, most perfect

[1] *Criticisms, Reflections, and Maxims.* Translated by W. B. Rönnfeldt, p. 189-91. — [2] *Der Imperator* (*Napoleon 1814*), pp. 333-4.

existence, a conception by which in his innermost soul he is exclusively occupied, the objects and efforts of other men appear to him so entirely insignificant, he finds himself so completely circumscribed and hemmed in by outward factors, that life becomes a burden to him. His sense of reality and truth is too strong to allow him to deceive himself into disregarding all actualities in the manner of Stirner and Nietzsche, and to find the absolute state of being in his own imaginary "creative" power. Apparently only suicide can deliver him from earthly misery. But his vital force is too strong to allow of his finding in self-destruction a release from the weariness of life. Accordingly he faces the world without self-delusion and without fear or hope. An absolute, true, and perfect existence such as would completely satisfy the soul cannot be found here below, it can neither be gained nor lost, it is quite out of the question: all else, however, is, at the best, but a reflection of the truly perfect: "All transitory things are sent but as symbols." Thus he can throw off all disturbing care about the final result of his own actions, all paralysing anxiety about their ultimate success. Outwardly fettered, but inwardly free, self-dependent, the man of genius now gives himself up to his great ideas with undivided interest, and attempts in the boldest manner to realise them, well knowing that the issue depends on external circumstances the influence of which is, after all, incalculable. For the very reason that the man of genius, deep down in his heart, neither fears nor hopes anything and is untroubled by anxiety for the present life or the hereafter, he can devote himself to his work with all his soul, with a love which is disinterested — disinterested taken in the wider sense as exemplified by the man who, in all sensations, thoughts, and actions does not always in bitter earnest keep in view the ultimate practical result to himself or

to others connected with him, but rather, as if playing some game, takes delight in the object itself to which his sensations, thoughts, or actions tend. He loses himself completely in the object to be carried out without having his unbiassed view obscured by anxiety about the ultimate issue: for man cannot command success: "Only the thought is thine, not the result."

This feeling of dependence, the conviction that even the greatest foresight cannot guard against the occurence of events, the effect of which may be of decisive importance, is given expression to in these great men's belief in their destiny, in the faith shown by them in their guiding star. Theodor Mommsen, speaking of Julius Cæsar, makes some most significant remarks in this connection: "It resulted from this clearness of judgment that Cæsar never formed illusions regarding the power of fate and the ability of man; in his case the friendly veil was lifted up, which conceals from man the inadequacy of his working. However prudently he planned and contemplated all possibilities, the feeling was never absent from his heart that in all things fortune, that is to say accident, must bestow success; and with this may be connected the circumstance that he so often played a desperate game with destiny, and in particular again and again hazarded his person with daring indifference. As indeed occasionally men of predominant sagacity betake themselves to a pure game of hazard, so there was in Cæsar's rationalism a point at which it came in some measure into contact with mysticism."[1]

Emerson expresses himself similarly about Napoleon: "He respected the power of nature and fortune, and ascribed to it his superiority, instead of valuing himself, like inferior men, on his opinionativeness, and waging war

[1] *The History of Rome.* Translated by W. P. Dickson, vol. IV, p. 426.

with nature. His favourite rhetoric lay in allusion to his star; and he pleased himself, as well as the people, when he styled himself the 'Child of Destiny.' 'They charge me,' he said, 'with the commission of great crimes: men of my stamp do not commit crimes. Nothing has been more simple than my elevation; 'tis in vain to ascribe it to intrigue or crime: it was owing to the peculiarity of the times, and to my reputation of having fought well against the enemies of my country. I have always marched with the opinion of great masses, and with events. Of what use, then, would crimes be to me?' Again he said, speaking of his son, 'My son cannot replace me; I could not replace myself. I am the creature of circumstance.'"[1]

Max Lenz, again, lays stress upon the deep sense of dependence on outward circumstances which governed this genius and man of action, a feeling which the superman of Stirner and Nietzsche, lost in self-deception, must needs ignore, since otherwise he cannot uphold the existence of his imaginary "creative" deity. Lenz says of Napoleon: "No one was more thoroughly imbued with the conviction that he, the destroyer, the conqueror of the world, he to whose ambition apparently no limits were set, was himself helpless against the omnipotence of fate. He was as entirely bound up in his system as Cæsar, Alexander, and other giants of history were in theirs, such being the only men to whom he can be compared. But, like them, he was a creature of circumstances, exposed to the force of mighty influences, neither called forth by him nor under his control, influences older than himself and his time and closely interwoven with the life of nations: some he purposely evoked, others he restrained: he hoped to tame them all and to use them in the attainment of his one object" — the subjugation

[1] *Representative Men and other Essays*, 1910, p. 264.

of England — "and was fated to see how nearly all of them combined to stifle him in their terrible embrace. How often, in the intervals between battles or while negotiations were taking place, did he think of the system that fettered him, of the fate whose servant he was. '*J'ai un maître qui n'a pas d'entrailles, c'est la nature des choses,*' he writes to Josephine from the midst of the Polish winter campaign. 'I know,' he says to her, 'how to do other things besides waging war, but duty comes first of all. To my vocation I have sacrificed my whole life, my repose, my interest, and my happiness."[1]

Bleibtreu observes: "To God alone the honour! Whether we call the Invisible by the name of God or by that of Fate, all great men — intuitively fatalists — have been aware that their triumph did not depend on their genius alone, but on the will of the Spirit that rules the world. Hence Napoleon frankly declared that once his mission was fulfilled, even an atom might cause his fall. ... Napoleon, as is well known, believed, with the full clarity of an intellect which embraced the world, in a providence that he called 'Fate.' '*La Providence*' was ever on his lips ... Undoubtedly Napoleon felt himself to be the instrument of a higher power, trusting to its guidance ... Such a fatalism is at bottom profoundly religious, and the prisoner of St. Helena, who bowed his head before Jesus, represented himself as really being so."[2]

How ridiculous, in contrast to all this, are the megalomaniacal words of Nietzsche: "But that I may reveal my heart entirely unto you, my friends: *if* there were Gods, how could I endure it to be no God! *Therefore* there are no Gods."[3]

[1] *Napoleon I. und Preußen* (Cosmopolis, Februar 1898, vol. IX, p. 584). — [2] *Der Imperator (Napoleon 1814)*, p. 386. — [3] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XI, p. 99 *(Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Transl. by Th. Common).

Closely connected with the extraordinary boldness in grasping and carrying out ideas is the keen insight of the man of genius into the true nature of all that exists. He remains inwardly free, is superior to things, and, liberated from all care, he unflinchingly looks reality in the face. He therefore grasps things and circumstances as they actually are. The man of genius has the faculty of *seeing*, whereas the judgment of the average man, biassed by a thousand considerations, anxieties, and cares, is always partial and faulty. Bleibtreu, therefore, calls Napoleon "intellect incarnate," and Emerson says of him: "He had a directness of action never before combined with so much comprehension. He is a realist, terrific to all talkers, and confused truth-obscuring persons. He sees where the matter hinges, throws himself on the precise point of resistance, and slights all other considerations. He is strong in the right manner, namely, by insight. He never blundered into victory, but won his battles in his head, before he won them on the field. His principal means are in himself. He asks counsel of no other. In 1796, he writes to the Directory; 'I have conducted the campaign without consulting any one. I should have done no good, if I had been under the necessity of conforming to the notions of another person.'"[1]

Carlyle expresses himself similarly on Napoleon: "Across these outer manœuvrings and quackeries of his, which were many and most blamable, let us discern withal that the man had a certain instinctive ineradicable feeling for reality; and did base himself upon fact, so long as he had any basis. He has an instinct of Nature better than his culture was. His *savans*, Bourrienne tells us, in that voyage to Egypt were one evening busily occupied arguing that there could be no God. They had proved it,

[1] *Representative Men*, 1910, pp. 264-5.

to their satisfaction, by all manner of logic. Napoleon looking up into the stars, answers, 'Very ingenious, Messieurs: but *who made* all that?' The Atheistic logic runs off from him like water; the great Fact stares him in the face: 'Who made all that?' So too in Practice: he, as every man that can be great, or have victory in this world, sees, through all entanglements, the practical heart of the matter; drives straight towards that. When the steward of his Tuileries Palace was exhibiting the new upholstery, with praises, and demonstration how glorious it was, and how cheap withal, Napoleon, making little answer, asked for a pair of scissors, clipt one of the gold tassels from a window-curtain, put it in his pocket, and walked on. Some days afterwards, he produced it at the right moment, to the horror of his upholstery functionary; it was not gold but tinsel! In Saint Helena, it is notable how he still, to his last days, insists on the practical, the real. 'Why talk and complain; above all, why quarrel with one another? There is no *result* in it; it comes to nothing that one can *do*. Say nothing, if one can do nothing!'"[1]

Mommsen's characterisation of Cæsar, which shows corresponding features, is unsurpassed: "Cæsar was thoroughly a realist and a man of sense; and whatever he undertook and achieved was pervaded and guided by the cool sobriety which constitutes the most marked peculiarity of his genius. To this he owed the power of living energetically in the present, undisturbed either by recollection or by expectation; to this he owed the capacity of acting at any moment with collected vigour, and applying his whole genius even to the smallest and most incidental enterprise; to this he owed the many-sided power with which he grasped and mastered whatever

[1] *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, (Routledge), pp. 315-6.

understanding can comprehend and will can compel; to this he owed the self-possessed ease with which he arranged his periods as well as projected his campaigns; to this he owed the 'marvellous serenity' which remained steadily with him through good and evil days; to this he owed the complete independence, which admitted of no control by favourite or by mistress, or even by friend ... A thorough realist, he never allowed the images of the past or venerable tradition to disturb him; with him nothing was of value in politics but the living present and the law of reason, just as in grammar he set aside historical and antiquarian research and recognised nothing but on the one hand the living *usus loquendi* and on the other hand the rule of symmetry." [1]

Plutarch relates how Alexander even at an early age manifested a rational and realistic conception of things: "While he was yet very young, he entertained the ambassadors from the King of Persia, in the absence of his father, and entering much into conversation with them, gained so much upon them by his affability, and the questions he asked them, which were far from being childish or trifling (for he inquired of them the length of the ways, the nature of the road into inner Asia, the character of their king, how he carried himself to his enemies, and what forces he was able to bring into the field), that they were struck with admiration of him, and looked upon Philip's so much famed ability to be nothing in comparison with the forwardness and high purpose that appeared thus early in his son." [2]

Much might be said of the devotion with which these great men, even in their youth, pursued their objects.

[1] *The History of Rome.* Translated by W. P. Dickson, vol. IV, pp. 426, 428.

[2] *Lives. The "Dryden Plutarch."* Revised by A. H. Clough, 1912, p. 466.

Concerning Alexander, O. E. Schmidt states his opinion as follows: "His education and training were thoroughly Hellenic; Alexander devoted himself to all kinds of bodily exercises, he was an excellent wrestler, javelin-thrower, swimmer, and rider — indeed, when still a young man, he is said to have tamed the Thessalian stallion, Bucephalus — but besides, he was introduced by Aristotle into the world of æsthetic feeling and of deep thought: especially the poems of Homer made an ineradicable impression on the susceptible boy, who longed to become a second Achilles. Taken all in all, his was a highly gifted, bodily and mentally precocious nature, he was a youth with well-proportioned limbs, equally graceful when walking or sitting, endowed with a mind directed primarily only to what was noble, and sustained by a grand flight of ideas, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot a king and a hero."[1]

In the following striking passage Leopold von Ranke refers to the hero's mind and its mainspring of grand ideas: "In Alexander pulsed both a poetic and a religious vein, the product of the heroic cult and the traditions nationalised by the poets. For him the Homeric writings formed, as it were, a historical record from which he derived his claims. With a kind of fervency he held fast to his faith in the gods. This has sometimes been attributed to the fact that his mother Olympias, to whom in his youth he was all the more devotedly attached, because she was unjustly treated by his father, had been initiated into the Samothracian Mysteries. But he was at the same time the pupil of Aristotle who desired that the Asiatics should be freed from Persian rule for the sake of their own improvement. In Alexander the flight of imagination was

[1] *Spamers Illustrierte Weltgeschichte: Illustrierte Geschichte des Altertums*, 3. Auflage, 1896, Band II, p. 8.

completely permeated with Hellenic ideas. While forcing the Greeks to yield him obedience, he, nevertheless, nourished the thought of taking up and carrying through their war with the Persians, but only to open up wider fields for their culture. Alexander is one of the few men in whose case biography is pervaded by the history of the world. His impulses were directed to the prosecution of a struggle begun centuries before, on which from that time on was built the progress of the universal development of mankind."[1]

The contrasts in the character of the man of genius are excellently described by Ranke. He says of Alexander: "He was a man through and through, easily accessible to opposite impulses. He did not avoid the society of Thais, but honoured Sisygambis; he dethroned Darius and avenged his death. With all his failings, he ever preserved an inborn sense, an instinct, as it were, for what was stupendous and truly great. In his bodily frame Alexander exhibited a rare combination of muscular strength and agility. In his eyes people thought they could trace an expression both of susceptible tenderness and of lion-like courage. The characteristic features in the pictures of him that existed in antiquity, consisted in a lofty, open brow with hair flowing back from it, and a slight inclination of the head towards the left side. The bust in the Louvre is probably a copy of an original executed in Alexander's lifetime. It breathes strength of mind, subtlety, and good nature. The observer can hardly tear himself away from it when at the same time he recalls the deeds and qualities of the man it represents."[2]

The æsthetic sense, the capacity of abandoning oneself entirely to an impression of the senses or of the imagination, was highly developed in Alexander; his eagerness

[1] *Weltgeschichte* (Text-Ausgabe), 1895, Bd. I, p. 284. — [2] Id. pp. 307-8.

for truth, his scientific and philosophical ambition too. Plutarch relates: "Alexander was naturally a great lover of all kinds of learning and reading; and Onesicritus informs us that he constantly laid Homer's Iliads, according to the copy corrected by Aristotle, called the casket copy, with his dagger under his pillow, declaring that he esteemed it a perfect portable treasure of all military virtue and knowledge. When he was in the upper Asia, being destitute of other books, he ordered Harpalus to send him some; who furnished him with Philistus's History, a great many of the plays of Euripides, Sophocles, and Æschylus, and some dithyrambic odes, composed by Telestes and Philoxenus. For a while he loved and cherished Aristotle no less, as he was wont to say himself, than if he had been his father, giving this reason for it, that as he had received life from the one, so the other had taught him to live well.... It would appear that Alexander received from Aristotle not only his doctrines of Morals and of Politics, but also something of those more abstruse and profound theories which these philosophers, by the very names they gave them, professed to reserve for oral communication to the initiated, and did not allow many to become acquainted with. For when he was in Asia, and heard Aristotle had published some treaties of that kind, he wrote to him, using very plain language to him in behalf of philosophy, the following letter. 'Alexander to Aristotle, greeting. You have not done well to publish your books of oral doctrine; for what is there now that we excel others in, if those things which we have been particularly instructed in be laid open to all? For my part, I assure you, I had rather excel others in the knowledge of what is excellent, than in the extent of my power and dominion. Farewell.' And Aristotle, soothing this passion for pre-eminence, speaks, in his excuse for himself, of these

doctrines as in fact both published and not published: as indeed, to say the truth, his books on metaphysics are written in a style which makes them useless for ordinary teaching, and instructive only, in the way of memoranda, for those who have been already conversant in that sort of learning."[1]

In his practical conduct Alexander displayed the already mentioned characteristics of a truly great man, the boldest initiative, the greatest self-reliance, such as arise from a complete devotion to high aims. He who makes straight for his object, knows no regard either for himself or for others. Alexander loved company, spectacular exhibitions, long conversations over his cups, but "when his affairs called upon him, he would not be detained, as other generals often were, either by wine, or sleep, nuptial solemnities, spectacles, or any other diversion whatsoever; a convincing argument of which is, that in the short time he lived, he accomplished so many and such great actions."[2] In battle he was ever at the front, and frequently enough he had hairbreadth escapes. Where privations were unavoidable he himself set the best example to his troops. Nothing was more slavish, he is reported to have said, according to Plutarch, than to indulge in luxury, nothing, on the other hand, more kingly than to be active and industrious.

Cæsar's versatility, his æsthetic sense, his scientific interests, his extraordinarily bold and grand mode of action are universally extolled. With reference to these qualities Schmidt says: "Nature had endowed this man with her gifts in a really lavish manner. On a beautiful, well-proportioned, slender body, equally fit to bear either the strain of enjoyment or of labour, was set a finely shaped head with a boldly aquiline nose and dark, flashing

[1] *Lives*, pp. 468-469. — [2] Id. p. 482.

eyes that seemed to express a penetrative clearness of intellect, indomitable force of will, and a lofty flight of ideas. An imperturbable, all-captivating cheerfulness illumined the noble features on which even the cup of sensual pleasures, drained to the dregs, had left no traces. Inimitable amiability in address and social forms, which even his opponents could not resist, drew all those of his contemporaries who were of any importance within the circle of his personal charm and for a longer or shorter time made them the servants of his will. And what an overflow of brilliant faculties lived in this inspired soul: he afterwards became not only the first military leader of his time, a renowned statesman and far-seeing lawgiver, but he was also able to put in the shade most of those who competed with him as lawyers, orators, poets, historians, linguists, mathematicians and architects."[1]

Mommsen is perhaps not wrong in saying that Cæsar's poems were not, after all, of the very best. But also Mommsen's description of the inspired Roman swells into a poetic pæan. He extols in him the perfect man: "In his character as a man as well as in his place in history, Cæsar occupies a position where the great contrasts of existence meet and balance each other. Of the mightiest creative power and yet at the same time of the most penetrating judgment; no longer a youth and not yet an old man; of the highest energy of will and the highest capacity of execution; filled with republican ideals and at the same time born to be a king; a Roman in the deepest essence of his nature, and yet called to reconcile and combine in himself as well as in the outer world the Roman and the Hellenic types of culture — Cæsar was the entire and perfect man . . . As the artist can paint every-

[1] *Spamers Illustrierte Weltgeschichte: Illustrierte Geschichte des Altertums*, 3. Auflage, 1896, Band II, pp. 634-5.

thing save only consummate beauty, so the historian, when once in a thousand years he encounters the perfect, can only be silent regarding it. For normality, it is true, admits of being expressed, but it gives us only the negative notion of the absence of defect; the secret of nature, whereby in her most finished manifestations normality and individuality are combined, is beyond expression. Nothing is left for us but to deem those fortunate who beheld this perfection, and to gain some faint conception of it from the reflected lustre which rests imperishably on the works that were the creation of this great nature. These also, it is true, bear the stamp of the time. The Roman hero himself stood by the side of his youthful Greek predecessor not merely as an equal, but as a superior; but the world had meanwhile become old and its youthful lustre had faded. The action of Cæsar was no longer, like that of Alexander, a joyous marching onward towards a goal indefinitely remote; he built on, and out of, ruins, and was content to establish himself as tolerably and as securely as possible within the ample but yet definite bounds once assigned to him. With reason therefore the delicate poetic tact of the nations has not troubled itself about the unpoetical Roman, and has invested the son of Philip alone with all the golden lustre of poetry, with all the rainbow hues of legend. But with equal reason the political life of nations has during thousands of years again and again reverted to the lines which Cæsar drew; and the fact, that the peoples to whom the world belongs still at the present day designate the highest of their monarchs by his name, conveys a warning deeply significant and, unhappily, fraught with shame."[1]

Napoleon's extreme selfishness and inconsiderateness have been blamed in every possible strain, but it has

[1] *The History of Rome*, vol. IV, p. 430-31.

been overlooked that in his case also they were the reverse of the medal, nor has it been observed how his selfishness and inconsiderateness developed. If he had come in contact with people of a different kind, he also would have become a different man. He had a capacity for the greatest self-devotion, for the most glowing enthusiasm. But how mean and small did all the people around him prove. How fervent was his patriotism, how ready was he to stake everything, his life, his future as a French officer, in the effort to free his native country, Corsica, from the French yoke, and what experiences was he fated to pass through in the attempt! His ideal world was utterly different from the real one, and once his keen and penetrating glance had completely grasped their dissimilarity, he had done with the world, with his native country, Corsica, and with everything else. And this also it was that rendered him incapable of love or friendship for individuals: nowhere could he find an ideal companion; indeed he gave up all hope of finding one.

August Fournier reports: "'When I entered the Army,' said Napoleon one day to Madame de Rémusat, 'I found garrison life very boring. I began reading novels and was tremendously interested. I even tried to write some which gave free play to my imagination and drew out the positive knowledge I had acquired; and often I amused myself dreaming, and then measuring my fancies by the light of reason. I transported myself in thought to an ideal world, and then sought wherein it differed from the real one in which I lived.' So he was still a dreamer! Even when free from the restraints of school-life and in constant touch with every-day affairs he retained his old love of seclusion and reverie. (*Rémusat*, 'Memoires,' I. 267.)"[1]

[1] *Napoleon I. A Biography.* Translated by A. E. Adams, 2nd ed., 1912, vol. I, p. 13.

— — "How may the people of his ideal world have looked, when those of the real one, compared with the former, became at once unworthy of intercourse with him?"[1]

The enthusiasm that young Napoleon felt, not only for the liberation of his native Corsica, but also for the new ideas of freedom generally, is sufficiently known. On this point Fournier says: "He used even then," — in the garrison of *La Fère* — "and more than previously, to devote himself to serious study and especially to the reading of political and historical books. This was the time when the greatest minds in France had come forward as teachers and leaders of the nation, proclaiming those theories of enlightenment that condemned the existing state of things and demanded a new state and a new society. The writings of Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and d'Alembert were in every one's hands. Bonaparte too, while he was yet at the Paris Academy, had studied them with zeal and the words of Jean Jacques have seldom fallen on more fruitful soil. He made extracts from the '*Contrat Social*,' annotated them, and joined enthusiastically in the Geneva Philosopher's enthusiasm for the natural state of men. Further, he read Filangieri's '*Scienza della Legislazione*,' which at that time — from 1780 on — undeservedly found a large public, Adam Smith's '*Wealth of Nations*,' Necker's '*Compte Rendu*,' and many other works. Yet, more than all Raynal seems to have influenced his immediate development. Raynal was, during the ninth decade of the eighteenth century, the most widely read author in France. His '*Histoire philosophique et politique des Établissements et du Commerce des Européens dans les Deux Indes*' had gained undisputed authority on account of its revolutionary tendencies. In-

[1] *Napoleon I. Eine Biographie*, 1889, Band I, p. 12.

deed the book offered more than could be premised from its title. It gave, e. g., an account, not only of the constitutional conditions of China, but also compared them with those in France, not to the advantage of the latter. With forcible eloquence it described the state of affairs at home, the unreasonable privileges of the nobility and the higher clergy, the deep chasm between rich and poor, and the want of legal rights of the middle class, the demoralising venality of public offices, the wretched administration of the public finances, and predicted approaching collapse, nay more, it expressly incited to revolution as a positive duty under these circumstances. This doctrine made a profound impression on Napoleon, deeper even than the teachings of Rousseau. Afterwards, in a work entitled 'On Human Happiness,' which (with all its orthographical mistakes) he presented before the Academy of Lyons in 1791, he acknowledged himself a zealous disciple of Raynal. In the year 1787 he became personally acquainted with him, spoke with him about his study of the history of his native country, and a few years later actually gave him a fragment, 'Letters on Corsica,' which he had begun in 1786 and in which he brought down the history of the Island to the time of Paoli. Napoleon's brother Lucien declared that Raynal had shown these 'Letters' to Mirabeau, and that the latter had extolled the genius of the writer."[1]

Napoleon's life as a young officer was not an easy one, and he who finds fault with his egoism should first attempt to perform what Bonaparte accomplished as a young man. Bleibtreu writes: "Even his enemies, so far as they knew him intimately, are unanimous in reporting that he was good-natured and accessible to pity. His behaviour towards his family was always exemplary; he

[1] *Napoleon I. Eine Biographie*, 1889, Band I, pp. 14, 15.

imposed privations on himself, when a lieutenant, in order to give his brother Louis a good education."[1] He engaged in literary work, not merely from an interest in literature, but to help to support his mother at home. According to Fournier, "he with his untiring pen, produced, in addition to his Corsican History, a novel the scene of which is laid in his native isle, another entitled 'The Earl of Essex,' and stories in the style of Diderot and Voltaire. But he was by no means content with expressing his thoughts in writing, he likewise wished to see them printed and read, desiring this not merely to satisfy his ambition or vanity, but to make money. For he was never free from material cares during his garrison life, on the contrary, they increased and tormented him beyond endurance. Not that he was unable to supply his needs with his hundred livres of monthly pay, for his wants were few. Little more than eight livres defrayed the expense of his lodgings with Mademoiselle Bon in Valence, and, for a time, he ate only one meal a day. And the rarity of his intercourse with his dashing comrades in the regiment was really also an economy. But the resources of his mother Letitia at home occasionally became rather scanty."[2]

From that time also dates the entry in the diary in which his longing for death finds expression. Fournier gives it in detail as follows: "Always alone, even in the midst of people, I have withdrawn to my room to commune with myself and give free vent to my despondency. Whither do my thoughts turn to-day? To death. Yet my life is only at its dawn and I may expect to live a long time. I have been away from my native land between six and seven years. What a delight it will be to me to meet my

[1] *Der Imperator (Napoleon 1814)*, p. 390.
[2] *Napoleon I. Eine Biographie*, 1889, Band I, p. 15.

compatriots and my own dear ones again! From the sweet emotions roused by the memories of my childhood, may I not conclude that my happiness will be complete? What madness is it therefore that urges me on to destruction? What indeed am I to do in the world? Since I must die some day, why not now? If I were a man of sixty I would respect the prejudices of my contemporaries and wait patiently till Nature had run her course. But since misfortune has met me on the very threshold of life and I have no delight in anything, why prolong such an existence? How far off men are from nature! How cowardly, servile and despicable! What sight awaits me in my native land? My countrymen, loaded with chains, kiss with trembling the hand that oppresses them. They are no longer the brave Corsicans whom a hero inspired with his own virtues, no longer as of yore the enemy of tyrants and luxury and cringing courtiers... Frenchmen! Not content with having robbed us of what we valued most, you have corrupted our morals. The present condition of my country and my powerlessness to alter it, is only a fresh reason for my quitting a world where duty compels me to praise those whom virtue bids me despise. What could I do, suppose I were back in my native country? what could I say? When his country has ceased to be, nothing remains for a good citizen but to die. Were there only one life to be destroyed in order to free my compatriots, I would instantly hasten to plunge a dagger into the tyrant's breast and so avenge my country and these dishonoured laws. My life is a burden to me, for it holds out no prospect of pleasure, and everything seems to turn into a cause of sorrow because those among whom I live and shall probably always live are utterly unlike myself, as unlike as sunlight to moonlight. I cannot therefore lead the kind of life which alone would make

existence bearable, and hence arises endless dissatisfaction with everything."[1]

Fournier adds the very pertinent remarks: "Nothing could be more characteristic than this outpouring of a discordant soul. Goethes 'Werther' — which Napoleon is said to have read five times — and Rousseau's sentimental writings had not been without their effect on him. Such reading left its mark in more ways than one. But alongside of this element, and dominating his nature, was the vigorous intellect, extremely self-reliant, and so you feel that the writer of the diary who talks so fluently of death, has as little intention of killing himself as he had twenty-eight years later, at Fontainbleau, when a dethroned Emperor. It is always the same dual nature, to which Napoleon had himself alluded in the conversation with Madame de Rémusat, the same fantastic reveries, to be subjected afterwards to the calm and methodical scrutiny of his reason, the same idealism, curbed and governed by an intellect at once impressionable and calculating. Such was the groundwork of his character and the key to its comprehension."[2]

This "dual nature" of genius, which Fournier here describes in Napoleon, we see everywhere accentuated by good writers when treating of these great men. Mediocre and inferior writers see everything one-sidedly, and so they observe also in these geniuses and men of action only the one side, the harshness and want of considerateness for others with which they pursue their aims, the most boundless selfishness. But that which dwells invisible in the heart, the disinterested devotion to ideas, the unreserved engagement of self in the service of these ideas, remains hidden to the superficial glance.

[1] *Napoleon I. A Biography.* Translated by A. E. Adams, 2nd. ed., 1912, vol. I, p. 16, 17. — [2] Id. p. 17.

True it is, that these great men did not remain faithful to themselves, they became apostates to their own inspired nature, with the exception, perhaps, of Julius Cæsar who, according to the excellent description of him by Mommsen, seems to have continued master of himself till the very end. Even men of genius are ultimately subject to human weakness. Faust, too, finally is blinded by the breath of Care; at last he becomes, indeed, as blind as ordinary men are throughout their lives. Faust becomes blind after he has renounced the magic power of genius. Until then he has been moved constantly and solely by ideas, which ever carried him on towards the highest idea of the Absolute, yet, when physical and mental decay have set in, he at last cleaves to the dust and becomes engrossed by the care for finite possessions, for the things of this world.

This was surely also the case with Alexander and Napoleon. The Macedonian hero's noble and proud daring and his imperturbable equanimity appear at last to have forsaken him. Plutarch reports that, shortly before his death, Alexander had become suspicious, anxious, and superstitious. He began to cling anxiously to the life that formerly he had always been ready to throw away. "As he was upon his way to Babylon, Nearchus, who had sailed back out of the ocean up the mouth of the river Euphrates, came to tell him he had met with some Chaldæan diviners, who had warned him against Alexander's going thither. Alexander, however, took no thought of it, and went on, and when he came near the walls of the place, he saw a great many crows fighting with one another, some of whom fell down just by him. After this, being privately informed that Apollodorus, the governor of Babylon, had sacrificed, to know what would become of him, he sent for Pythagoras, the soothsayer, and on his admitting the thing, asked him in what condition he found the victim; and when he told

him the liver was defective in its lobe, 'A great presage indeed!' said Alexander. However, he offered Pythagoras no injury, but was sorry that he had neglected Nearchus's advice, and stayed for the most part outside the town, removing his tent from place to place, and sailing up and down the Euphrates. Besides this, he was disturbed by many other prodigies. A tame ass fell upon the biggest and handsomest lion that he kept, and killed him by a kick. And one day after he had undressed himself to be anointed, and was playing at ball, just as they were going to bring his clothes again, the young men who played with him perceived a man clad in the king's robes with a diadem upon his head, sitting silently upon his throne. They asked him who he was, to which he gave no answer a good while, till at last, coming to himself, he told them his name was Dionysius, that he was of Messenia, that for some crime of which he was accused he was brought thither from the seaside, and had been kept long in prison, that Serapis appeared to him, had freed him from his chains, conducted him to that place, and commanded him to put on the king's robe and diadem, and to sit where they found him, and say nothing. Alexander, when he heard this, by the direction of his soothsayers, put the fellow to death, but he lost his spirits, and grew diffident of the protection and assistance of the gods, and suspicious of his friends." [1]

Plutarch then adds: "When once Alexander had given way to fears of supernatural influence, his mind grew so disturbed and so easily alarmed that, if the least unusual or extraordinary thing happened, he thought it a prodigy or a presage, and his court was thronged with diviners and priests whose business was to sacrifice and purify and foretell the future. So miserable a thing is incredu-

[1] *Lives. The "Dryden Plutarch."* Revised by A. H. Clough, 1912, vol. II, pp. 526-7.

lity and contempt of divine power on the one hand, and so miserable, also, superstition on the other, which like water, where the level has been lowered, flowing in and never stopping, fills the mind with slavish fears and follies, as now in Alexander's case." [1]

Just as Faust's obsession by Care, — by the "Sister of Death," by superstition, hope and fear, — must be attributed to his beginning dissolution, so also did Alexander already carry within him the germ of death, when his conduct gave evidence of this superstitious fear. To no small degree, in all probability, did the occasional indulgence in wine, so destructive both to the body and the mind, contribute to bring about Alexander's premature end, and sometimes to deprive him of all control over himself. In a fit of drunkenness and rage he killed his intimate, Clitus, who had saved his life at the battle of the Granicus. It is interesting to observe that when Alexander was so frantic with grief and remorse on account of this deed that he was about to lay violent hands on himself, a precursor of Stirner and Nietzsche, the antisopher, Anaxarchus of Abdera, consoled him by pointing to the morality of false, imaginary superhumanity, namely, to the doctrine that everything was good which the egoist, the tyrant and anarchist, the "master," [2] the "aristocrat" was pleased to think good, and that all his actions were good, just because he himself performed them.

Plutarch reports: "Alexander snatching a spear from one of the soldiers, met Clitus as he was coming forward and was putting by the curtain that hung before the door, and ran him through the body. He fell at once with a cry and a groan. Upon which the king's anger immediately vanishing, he came perfectly to himself,

[1] *Lives*, vol. II, p. 528. — [2] *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 20.

and when he saw his friends about him all in a profound silence, he pulled the spear out of the dead body, and would have thrust it into his own throat, if the guards had not held his hands, and by main force carried him away into his chamber, where all that night and the next day he wept bitterly, till being quite spent with lamenting and exclaiming, he lay as it were speechless, only fetching deep sighs. His friends apprehending some harm from his silence, broke into the room, but he took no notice of what any of them said, till Aristander putting him in mind of the vision he had seen concerning Clitus, and the prodigy that followed, as if all had come to pass by an unavoidable fatality, he then seemed to moderate his grief. They now brought Callisthenes, the philosopher, who was the near friend of Aristotle, and Anaxarchus of Abdera, to him. Callisthenes used moral language, and gentle and soothing means, hoping to find access for words of reason, and get a hold upon the passion. But Anaxarchus, who had always taken a course of his own in philosophy, and had a name for despising and slighting his contemporaries, as soon as he came in, cried aloud, 'Is this the Alexander whom the whole world looks to, lying here weeping like a slave, for fear of the censure and reproach of men, to whom he himself ought to be a law and measure of equity, if he would use the right his conquests have given him as supreme lord and governor of all, and not be the victim of a vain and idle opinion? Do not you know,' said he, 'that Jupiter is represented to have Justice and Law on each hand of him, to signify that all the actions of a conqueror are lawful and just?' With these and the like speeches, Anaxarchus indeed allayed the king's grief, but withal corrupted his character, rendering him more audacious and lawless than he had been."[1]

[1] *Lives. The "Dryden Plutarch,"* vol. II, pp. 509-10.

Anaxarchus, indeed, reminded him of "the pathos of nobility and distance,"[1] as Nietzsche calls it. When a man has grown as powerful as Alexander, he destroys another like an insect and is entirely unaffected by it. The "distance," the aloofness of the powerful tyrant from any other man, even from one most closely connected with him, becomes, in Nietzsche's opinion, as great as that between a man and a fly; "in this case the individual is put out of the way like an unpleasant insect; he is too lowly to be allowed any longer to cause annoyance to a ruler of the world."[2] In such a case every act of the tyrant naturally is good in itself, his proceedings cease to be subject to criticism, and "Jupiter is represented to have Justice and Law on each hand of him, to signify that all the actions of a conqueror are lawful and just." Nietzsche says: "The pathos of nobility and distance, the chronic and despotic *esprit de corps* and fundamental instinct of a higher dominant race coming into association with a meaner race, an 'under race,' this is the origin of the antithesis of good and bad. The masters' right of giving names goes so far that it is permissible to look upon language itself as the expression of the power of the masters: they say: 'this *is* that, and that,' they seal finally every object and every event with a sound, and thereby at the same time take possession of it."[3]

A healthy feeling had always, except on a few occasions, preserved the real superman Alexander from this "pathos of nobility and distance" of the false superman, but the corrupting influence of his surroundings and the destructive effect of his intemperate indulgence in wine towards the end of his life made Alexander susceptible to the preaching of a narrow egoism. Anaxarchus came from

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 20. — [2] Id. vol. VI, pp. 86, 87. — [3] Id. vol. XIII, p. 20, 21.

Abdera, the town whose inhabitants represented in later antiquity our present wise men of Gotham, and many a piece of Gothamism, many a silly blunder was perpetrated by Alexander once he had chosen Anaxarchus for his guide and the imaginary, false divinity of his own person had for a time completely clouded the brain that in former days had been so clear. For instance, when his favourite Hephæstion died, he ordered all horses' and mules' manes to be cut as a sign of mourning and the walls of the surrounding towns to be disembattled; and the like. It is amusing to read in Plutarch how fond Anaxarchus was, quite in the manner of our modern antisophers, of dealing in paradoxes that ran counter to all truth and reality, and how his opponent Callisthenes once thoroughly snubbed him: "It happened that these two philosophers met at an entertainment where conversation turned on the subject of climate and the temperature of the air, Callisthenes joined with their opinion, who held that those countries were colder, and the winter sharper there than in Greece. Anaxarchus would by no means allow this, but argued against it with some heat. 'Surely,' said Callisthenes, 'you cannot but admit this country to be colder than Greece, for there you used to have but one threadbare cloak to keep out the coldest winter, and here you have three good warm mantles one over another.' This piece of raillery irritated Anaxarchus very much."[1]

Napoleon too shared the fate of the dying Faust. He also finally lost the keen perception of genius, and what he himself had formerly despised, hated, and destroyed, he now wished to re-establish: the old *régime* with its absurdities, its flunkeyism, and its gilded lies. This is wonderfully expressed by Carlyle: "There was an

[1] *Lives. The "Dryden Plutarch."* Revised by A. H. Clough, 1912, vol. II, p. 510.

eye to see in this man, a soul to dare and do. He rose naturally to be the King. All men saw that he *was* such. The common soldiers used to say on the march: 'These babbling *Avocats*, up at Paris; all talk and no work! What wonder it runs all wrong? We shall have to go and put our *Petit Caporal* there!' They went, and put him there; they and France at large. Chief-consulship, Emperorship, victory over Europe; — till the poor Lieutenant of *La Fère*, not unnaturally, might seem to himself the greatest of all men that had been in the world for some ages.

"But at this point, I think, the fatal charlatan-element got the upper hand. He apostatized from his old faith in Facts, took to believing in Semblances; strove to connect himself with Austrian Dynasties, Popedoms, with the old false Feudalities which he once saw clearly to be false; — considered that *he* would found 'his Dynasty' and so forth; that the enormous French Revolution meant only that! The man was 'given-up to strong delusion, that he should believe a lie;' a fearful but most sure thing. He did not know true from false now when he looked at them, — the fearfullest penalty a man pays for yielding to untruth of heart. *Self* and false ambition had now become his god: *self*-deception once yielded to, *all* other deceptions follow naturally more and more. What a paltry patch-work of theatrical paper-mantles, tinsel and mummery, had this man wrapt his own great reality in, thinking to make it more real thereby! His hollow Pope's-*Concordat*, pretending to be a re-establishment of Catholicism, felt by himself to be the method of extirpating it, '*la vaccine de la religion:*' his ceremonial Coronations, consecrations by the old Italian Chimera in Notre-Dame, — 'wanting nothing to complete the pomp of it,' as Augereau said, 'nothing but the half-million of men who had died to put an end to all that!' Cromwell's Inauguration was by

the Sword and Bible; what we must call a genuinely *true* one. Sword and Bible were borne before him, without any chimera: were not these the *real* emblems of Puritanism; its true decoration and insignia? It had used them both in a very real manner, and pretended to stand by them now! But this poor Napoleon mistook: he believed too much in the *Dupability* of men; saw no fact deeper in man than Hunger and this! He was mistaken. Like a man that should build upon cloud; his house and he fall down in confused wreck, and depart out of the world."[1]

Before we take leave of temporal superhumanity, reference may be made to another peculiar transitional and mixed type of which we are reminded by the mention of Cromwell, who was both Saint and Warrior and had Sword and Bible borne before him. Everywhere in nature we find such transitional types and so likewise among these Exalted Ones: let us think of Mahomet, in whom the vocation of saviour with that of conqueror and ruler formed a very strange compound. The same man who with his sword cut off a corner of his cloak on which a cat was sleeping, so as to be able to kneel down to prayer without disturbing it, the same man vigorously wielded this sword against his enemies and bloodily stamped out all resistance. To dwell on this phenomenon in character would carry us too far; a single reference to it here suffices.

What we hope to have pointed out in this essay is that temporal superhumanity is only outwardly, and in contradiction to itself, in morbid degeneration alone, connected with the false superhumanity of Anaxarchus, Stirner and Nietzsche, but in its original and genuine form shows an inner connection with the religious, true superhumanity of

[1] *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, (Routledge), pp. 317-8.

Christ and Buddha. This is seen, on the one hand, in the deep religious conviction of the conquerors of the world, in their steadfast faith in a Providence and their mission, in their striving after the highest perfection of existence, so that, like Faust, drawn towards the Infinite, nothing Finite can absolutely bind them; on the other hand we see that the saviours of the world also, at some period of their lives, were exposed to the temptation of gaining worldly authority, in order to find in it a compensation for the satisfaction of their longing for a highest, perfect existence instead of turning inwardly and directly to what is eternal. We remind the reader in this connection of the temptations of Buddha and Christ.

Neither with temporal nor with religious superhumanity has the imaginary, utterly spurious superhumanity of Anaxarchus, Stirner, and Nietzsche any concern. For neither the conqueror of the world nor the saviour can exert any influence without the keenest insight into the true relations of life. The immense, far-reaching influence of these mighty men cannot be understood without the assumption that they penetrated deeply into the essence of men and things, that they had an eye for the essential points at which, to produce a great effect, the levers had to be applied, that, in a word they could *see*.

The final result of the false superhumanity of ancient and modern antisophers is, in the last resort, that they intoxicate themselves with their own imaginary divinity, and shut their eyes to all that might destroy this illusion. But he who thus substitutes his imagination for reality loses the power of controlling reality. In the man of petty nature the *idea* by which the great man shapes reality, is replaced by the imagination, by the *idol*.

X.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER MAN ACCORDING TO DARWIN, AND LOMBROSO'S HYPOTHESIS OF INSANITY

IN the second essay, on The Philosophic Aspiration of the Man of Genius, the attempt has been made to expound the doctrine of the ideas or forms of existence. We saw how each thing is based on an idea, how nothing can exist without a definite form that may affect our sensation, be grasped by our thought, and under certain circumstances be realised to some extent by our actions. But these ideas or forms of existence are not to be accepted as fixed and inalterable, not as absolute, but rather as fluctuating and subject to constant change, as relative. Every idea, every form means only a halting-place on the road from a definite starting-point to an only partially definite goal. Every idea, every form, points back, on the one hand, to an earlier, simpler, more imperfect idea or form from which it has proceeded and in more or less length of time been deepened and developed to its present perfection; but, on the other hand, every idea or form also points forward to a subsequent, more complicated and perfect idea or form to which, sooner or later, it will develop. To repeat, each idea or form therefore means only a halting-place or a stage on a road; in every idea or form is indicated the *direction* to be taken by a

definite force towards a state of being, by a definite impulse towards existence, by a will to live, so as to attain to an ever greater satisfaction, to a continual deepening and enhancement of its import.

The fact that this doctrine has come to be generally accepted in modern science with reference to the vegetable and animal kingdoms, inclusive of man, constitutes the great merit of the English naturalist Charles Darwin. Of all forms of existence known to us, that of man is the most highly developed, the most perfect. But what raises him to this eminence is his greater sympathy with his fellow-creatures, his more penetrating interest in all that occurs and his concomitant greater intelligence. On a former occasion perfection was defined as the capacity for existence. The higher the degree of perfection that a thing attains to, the more capable will it be of living, the higher will be its state of being. But what makes man more perfect than animals, namely, his greater sympathy with his fellow-creatures, his deeper interest in all that happens around him, and his more intense delight in all order and harmony, this, combined with certain corporeal advantages, is at the same time the cause of his greater capacity for existence.

Darwin says: "Man in the rudest state in which he now exists is the most dominant animal that has ever appeared on this earth. He has spread more widely than any other highly organised form: and all others have yielded before him. He manifestly owes this immense superiority to his intellectual faculties, to his social habits, which lead him to aid and defend his fellows, and to his corporeal structure. The supreme importance of these characters has been proved by the final arbitrament of the battle for life. Through his powers of intellect, articulate language has been evolved; and on this his wonderful advancement has

mainly depended. He has invented and is able to use various weapons, tools, traps, &c., with which he defends himself, kills or catches prey, and otherwise obtains food. He has made rafts or canoes for fishing or crossing over to neighbouring fertile islands. He has discovered the art of making fire, by which hard and stringy roots can be rendered digestible, and poisonous roots or herbs innocuous. This discovery of fire, probably the greatest ever made by man, excepting language, dates from before the dawn of history. These several inventions, by which man in the rudest state has become so pre-eminent, are the direct results of the development of his powers of observation, memory, curiosity, imagination, and reason."[1]

Man's principal advantage over animals, the source of all his other advantages, is the more penetrating interest that he takes in his surroundings. When this deeper interest is in his fellow-men, it finds expression in what we call the moral sense or the conscience. Man sympathises with man, that is, he feels the grief of another as his own, another's joy as his joy, he therefore desires the well-being or the existence of another. Now, it may happen that, carried away by passion, he wounds or injures another. But as soon as his rage is past, the original feeling of sympathy comes to the surface, and he who has injured another, now suffers himself under the effects of this injury, he himself is wounded in the other, and thus arises sorrow and anger with himself, an inward pain to which we apply the term, prick of conscience. Now, the greater the sympathy originally is in man, the greater also will be the pain caused by an injury inflicted on another. When a man has committed a wrong, and when we see that he himself suffers severely from it, we conclude that the feeling of sympathy in him is very strongly developed.

[1] *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*, 1909, pp. 72, 73.

But this participation in the suffering and joy of one's fellow-creatures is present in no animal to such a degree as in man. Consequently, no other animal seeks to protect his fellows against suffering and injury and to promote their existence in every respect, to heighten as much as possible their satisfaction in life, their joy and delight in existence, to the extent that man does. The result is the fact already mentioned, that man, as Darwin expresses it, has become "the most dominant animal that has ever appeared on this earth."

Darwin observes on this subject: "I fully subscribe to the judgment of those writers who maintain that of all the differences between man and the lower animals, the moral sense or conscience is by far the most important. This sense, as Mackintosh remarks, 'has a rightful supremacy over every other principle of human action;' it is summed up in that short but imperious word *ought*, so full of high significance. It is the most noble of all the attributes of man, leading him without a moment's hesitation to risk his life for that of a fellow-creature; or after due deliberation, impelled simply by the deep feeling of right or duty, to sacrifice it in some great cause." [1]

It is true, animals are not entirely deficient in sympathy with their fellows. Darwin states: "Animals of many kinds are social; we find even distinct species living together; for example some American monkeys; and united flocks of rooks, jackdaws, and starlings." [2] But this tendency towards fellowship, this sociability, and this sympathy with their comrades, does not pass certain bounds in animals, the relations between single individuals are always very loose. Man, on the other hand, is pre-eminently the "social animal." Darwin observes: "Every one will admit that man is a social being. We see this in his dislike of solitude,

[1] *The Descent of Man*, p. 148. — [2] Id. p. 153.

and in his wish for society beyond that of his own family. Solitary confinement is one of the severest punishments which can be inflicted. Some authors suppose that man primevally lived in single families; but at the present day, though single families, or only two or three together, roam the solitudes of some savage lands, they always, as far as I can discover, hold friendly relations with other families inhabiting the same district. Such families occasionally meet in council, and unite for their common defence."[1]

But if the greater power and dominion of man, his greater capacity for existence, are based on his greater sympathy with his fellows and on his greater interest in all that may serve the community of his fellows, then, in course of time, qualities so useful must naturally continue to display themselves more fully, and must ever become more strongly marked. For the existence of those individuals, in whom the virtues by which the whole community is benefited, are more pronounced, will generally be the better protected and promoted by the community; the individuals, on the other hand, who assume a hostile attitude towards their fellows, and pursue their own personal interests alone without regard to others, will be proscribed and exterminated by the majority. Thus, in the course of time, there must remain an ever greater number of individuals of companionable bent and tendencies, with social instincts, while those of an intolerant, spiteful, selfish, malevolent, inconsiderate, and criminal nature will ever be more effectually placed under restraint and rendered innocuous.

It is the same in the case of each single individual: in every man there are evil and good impulses, that is, such as tend to life and such as lead to destruction. If the evil impulses are quelled by the resistance they meet with

[1] *The Descent of Man*, pp. 165-6.

on the part of others, while the good impulses are fostered by encouragement, praise, and reward, the result must be that, in course of time, and if the person in question is capable of improvement, the power of the animal, savage, criminal instincts will decrease and the sympathetic, social instincts gather strength. With reference to these alternatives Darwin lays down the proposition: "The more enduring Social Instincts conquer the less persistent Instincts." [1]

Darwin speaks of man as the social animal; so we may call man the animal endowed with genius. If, on the one hand, it is the more highly developed sympathy with his fellows that distinguishes man from all other animals, so on the other hand, it is the more penetrating interest in all that occurs, in all outward and inner phenomena, that gives him his immense ascendency over all other forms of life. The animal has only very few interests, and when these are satisfied, it is no longer concerned in things and takes no further heed of them. The animal's mind is limited, confined, its horizon is quite narrow, and what lies beyond it is for the animal as if non-existent. Hence it is that animals require so few sounds and gestures in order to make themselves intelligible to one another, and hence it is that they possess no higher form of language. The animal forms, indeed, only very few general ideas which are connected with its simple instincts, and when it wishes to give expression to a feeling, it requires but very few simple sounds in order to awaken a corresponding feeling in another animal and to transmit to it a consciousness of the general idea in question.

The first beginnings of a more fully developed life are undoubtedly present in the more highly organised animals, but always within very narrow limits. A sense for beau-

[1] *The Descent of Man*, p. 168.

tiful colours and sounds is decidedly to be found in them, likewise a primitive power of thought and, under certain circumstances, a capacity for self-sacrifice and devotion. As an instance of this Darwin reports the case of the sympathetic and heroic conduct of a little American monkey: "Several years ago a keeper at the Zoological Gardens showed me some deep and scarcely healed wounds on the nape of his own neck, inflicted on him whilst kneeling on the floor, by a fierce baboon. The little American monkey, who was a warm friend of this keeper, lived in the same large compartment, and was dreadfully afraid of the great baboon. Nevertheless, as soon as he saw his friend in peril, he rushed to the rescue, and by screams and bites so distracted the baboon that the man was able to escape, after, as the surgeon thought, running great risk of his life."[1]

Animals are, therefore, by no means deficient in tendencies towards a higher development both of the faculty of sensation and that of thought as well as of the sympathetic sense; but the animal really endowed with genius, in whom all the gifts of nature have reached their highest development, is and, after all, remains man. But as in the whole animal world man alone has attained to this eminence, so again there are also among men only a few individuals in whom the natural dispositions common to all men are developed to a perfection by which they seem to form exceptions to the majority of men, in the same manner as the species man is distinguished from the other forms of living beings. Now, an examination of these exceptions if undertaken with insufficient care, may, on occasion, lead the observer to mistake the tendency towards a healthy development for a morbid perversion. The conclusion then follows: all that is healthy is at the

[1] *The Descent of Man*, pp. 157-8.

same time normal, all departures from the ordinary, normal condition are morbid symptoms. Now, genius is a departure from the ordinary condition, therefore genius is a morbid phenomenon. We feel at once that this is evidently a fallacious conclusion, even though we may not immediately be able to show wherein lies its fallacy. In recent times many have argued in this manner, especially the Italian psychiatrist, Cesare Lombroso, who writes: "The idea that genius was a special morbid condition had indeed often occured to me, but I had always repelled it; and besides, without a sure experimental basis, ideas today do not count. Like still-born children, they appear but for a moment, to disappear at once. I had been enabled to discover in genius various characters of degeneration which are the foundation and the sign of nearly all forms of congenital mental abnormality, but the exaggerated extension which was at that time given to theories of degeneration, and still more the vague and inexact character of that conception, had repelled me; so that I accepted the facts, but not their ultimate consequences. How, in fact, can one suppress a feeling of horror at the thought of associating with idiots and criminals those individuals who represent the highest manifestations of the human spirit?

"But recent teratological" (referring to monstrosities) "researches, especially those of Gegenbauer, have shown that the phenomena of atavistic retrogression do not always indicate true degradation, but that very often they are simply a compensation for considerable development and progress accomplished in other directions. Reptiles have more ribs than we have; quadrupeds and apes possess more muscles than we do, and an entire organ, the tail, which we lack. It has been in losing these advantages that we have gained our intellectual supe-

riority. When this is seen, the repugnance to the theory of genius as degeneration at once disappears. Just as giants pay a heavy ransom for their stature in sterility and relative muscular and mental weakness, so the giants of thought expiate their intellectual force in degeneration and psychoses. It is thus that the signs of degeneration are found more frequently in men of genius than even in the insane.

"And again, this theory has entered to-day on so certain a path, and agrees so entirely with my studies on genius, that it is impossible for me not to accept it, and not to see in it an indirect confirmation of my own ideas. I find this confirmation in the characters of degeneration recently discovered; and still more in the uncertainty of the theories which were at first advanced to explain the problem of genius. Thus Joly affirms in a too convenient formula that 'it is not even necessary to refute the theory of insanity in genius;' for, he says, 'strength is not weakness, health is not disease, and for the rest the cases quoted in favour of these hypotheses are only particular cases.' But the physician knows that very often, in the delirious and epileptic, strength is precisely an index of disease. As to the second objection, it falls to the ground as facts accumulate. It is certain that there have been men of genius presenting a complete equilibrium of the intellectual faculties; but they have presented defects of affectivity and feeling; though no one may have perceived it, or, rather, recorded it." [1]

Well, we may agree with Jolly and say with him: "It is not even necessary to refute the theory of insanity in genius, as strength is not weakness, health is not disease." And that man should owe his exceedingly high mental power only to the fact that he has fewer ribs than reptiles have,

[1] *The Man of Genius.* 2nd ed., 1905, pp. v, vi.

fewer muscles than quadrupeds and no tail, we may consider an altogether ridiculous assertion of Lombroso's. There are animals with, and others without, a tail, but it has never been heard that the presence of the tail or the difference in its length could be set up as a criterion of the mental faculties of animals, and just as little can it be supposed that the number of ribs and muscles has any connection with these mental faculties.

In this case Lombroso appeals to the law of compensation, of equalisation, which indeed is observable in very many phenomena and to which reference has been made in a previous essay. When a man loses his sight, the actual amount of vitality is transferred to the other senses, especially to those of hearing and touch, and brings them to a greater perfection, delicacy, and keenness than they possessed when the power of vision still claimed a part of the attention, of the vital energy, for itself. Thus a certain equalisation takes place in so far that the loss of one sense finds its compensation in the acquirement of a greater perfection by the other senses.

This is only one instance in which Nature seeks to supply a loss on the one side by an advantage on the other. Yet evidently there is always a *natural* proportion between the compensation and the loss, and when, therefore, the tail of an animal is cut off, it does not in any respect become more intelligent, nor does it then resemble man in his mental faculties to the same extent as it does physically in the fact of having no tail. The loss of a few ribs and muscles and of the tail presents no sufficient equivalent for the enormous increase in man's intellectual powers.

Again, it would also be wrong to say that the more delicate feeling of touch, and the keener sense of hearing, in a blind person are morbid, because the morbid decay of an organ, the loss of sight, is the *cause* of the refinement

of the other organs of sense. For in itself the fuller development and the greater energy of an organ, whatever may be the cause, is not morbid, that is, injurious and foreign to the whole organism, but on the contrary entirely healthy, that is, life-promoting. The better and the more energetically an organ performs its functions, the more capable of contributing towards the life and existence of the whole organism, the more healthy will it be.

Moreover it would be entirely wrong to conclude, as Lombroso does, that every unusual intensification of energy in an organ must be accompanied by a corresponding morbid decay of other organs. In a dog, for instance, the sense of smell is developed to an enormous degree, and that part of the dog's brain which receives the sensations of smell is, therefore, much more fully developed than the corresponding part in the brain of man, but the hearing and sight of the dog are in no degree affected or rendered morbidly degenerate as a consequence.

Further if, for as long a time as does the blind man, you direct your whole energy and attention to the exercise of the organs of hearing and touch, you will bring about an approximate refinement of these organs, without the organ of sight necessarily becoming morbidly degenerate. For the absence of the power of vision is not the *direct* cause of the refinement of a blind man's other organs of sense; it is rather the increased attention and the greater energy with which he now follows up all the sensations that he receives from hearing and touch, because these have now acquired a much greater importance for him since he must have recourse to them alone for finding his bearings in the outer world. If, like the blind man, you turn all your attention and energy to your sensations of hearing and touch, you can acquire the same exceptional skill in hearing and feeling without being forced to do so by the loss of

another organ. The loss of sight, therefore, is only the accidental, *indirect* cause, not the necessary, direct, and immediate cause of the increased activity of the other senses.

Now, Lombroso opines that whenever an organ develops to an unusual degree, another organ must simultaneously become dwarfed and morbidly degenerate and by applying this law specially to cerebral activity he arrives at the assertion that a man can never be mentally endowed beyond the average without, on the other hand, suffering some loss in mind and character, that is, without being in some way mentally disordered. And although he must admit "that there have been men of genius presenting a complete equilibrium of the intellectual faculties," yet his once formed opinion does not allow him simply to concede that in fact there have been men of genius who, like Goethe for instance, have been perfectly sane. In such cases Lombroso assumes "that they have presented defects of affectivity and feeling; though no one may have perceived it."

Lombroso's inferences are very amusing. Whereas he first traces the higher intelligence of man as compared with that of animals to the fact that man is deficient in the number of his ribs and muscles and by the absence of a tail, he immediately after, assumes that "the giants of thought expiate their intellectual force in degeneration and psychoses," that an increase of intelligence can only be produced at the expense of the mental organ, the brain itself. Why not here also at the expense of any other part of the body? Why should there not be perfectly mentally sound geniuses, who then, according to Lombroso's theory, would have to pay for the higher development of their brain by the degeneration of some other part of the body, for instance of the big toe?

Lombroso's theory is absurd: of logic there is little trace in the arguments of the Italian psychiatrist, as Virchow declared to a representative of the "Riforma" during the congress in Rome, and Jolly is entirely justified in saying that "it is not even necessary to refute the theory of insanity in genius." If, nevertheless, we have done so here, it is only because the great esteem in which Lombroso is held, and the large amount of quite uncritically sifted material adduced in his works as evidence of his hypothesis, have led many people to consider his phantasy of the insanity of genius as verified and to draw from it all sorts of conclusions, among others, for instance, that insanity is a sign of genius. If nowadays a man offends against good sense or morality there are people who, on the ground of Lombroso's arguments exclaim: "Look! there is a genius! It is true, he is mad, but this very madness is a proof of his being a genius." On the other hand genuine and sound genius is ridiculed as foolish idealism, as something pedantic and old-fashioned. Now, it is true that a number of men of great genius have finally become insane — we need only mention Lenau and Robert Schumann —, but nevertheless what they produced while sound of mind has nothing to do with insanity. And when men of genius, as a result of their lively fancy and their highly developed imagination, occasionally have had visions and have seen things that had no real existence, it does not follow that they suffered from any mental disorder. The psychiatrist, Heinrich Schüle says: "Of course it makes a tremendous difference whether a man like Goethe with characteristic placidity and clearness describes his vision of the Sesenheim ride, whether a Jean Paul with the dryness of a man of science ranges his own mental phantasms in line with the various pictures successively called up by his memory, or whether any other person confounding the casual delusions

of his senses with other true sense perceptions, in as firm a belief in the reality of the one as in the truth of the other, is stirred thereby in the innermost depths of his mind and feeling."[1]

Lombroso, however, takes no great trouble to verify his hypothesis. On the one hand he simply ascribes every deviation from normal conduct on the part of a man of genius to mental disorder, and on the other hand he sees in some of the confused doings of a really insane person the product of the creative power of genius. Thus he is naturally able to adduce a large number of instances of insane geniuses, only that men really endowed with genius are not insane, and those who are really insane are not men of genius. Schüle says: "It is undoubtedly a fact that men endowed with a high degree of genius have often been attacked by mental disease (Tasso, Swift, Lenau, Donizetti, Schumann). Further also there is the alternation between genius and mental disease frequently found in immediately successive generations of one family (Rousseau, Byron). But would this prove the identity of the nature of both? Could the creative power of a Goethe and a Newton, who expressed the views and feelings, and gave a direction to the thoughts of whole centuries, be fundamentally of the same character as the dazzling light-balls of a madman? By their fruits ye shall know them. The distinguishing mark is found in the permanent value of the deed which, although often springing from an obscure demonic impulse, yet when ultimately accomplished with clear consciousness and with entire devotion of mental energy, proves to be a fertile germ in the womb of time. That this great venture frequently succeeds only by exertions which undermine

[1] *Handbuch der Geisteskrankheiten*, 2. Auflage, 1880, p. 163 (im *Handbuch der speziellen Pathologie und Therapie*, herausgegeben von H. v. Ziemssen, Band XVI).

a somewhat feeble organisation, is no proof of the morbid nature of the deed itself. For in contrast to these men of genius who exhaust themselves by their devotion to an idea which fills their lives there are also those of even a more perfect and higher inspiration, who represent a marvellous harmony of all mental faculties and, far from suffering by their astonishing productive power, rather appear to renew their youthful mental vigour, and who, like Goethe, in spite of all their enormous mental work, yet continue to be *virtuosi* of life. Lamb is perfectly right in declaring it to be a pure impossibility to think of a Shakespeare as insane."[1]

How inadequately the logical faculty is developed in Lombroso, a proof that he entirely lacks the intellectual clearness and penetration of genius, is evident from the following passage: "*Misoneism.* — The men who create new worlds are as much enemies of novelty as ordinary persons and children."[2] The fallacy consists in this that, according to Lombroso, genius must be something distinctly abnormal, something different from "ordinary persons." But here he actually compares the great men that "create new worlds" with average men, with "ordinary persons," and discovers that they possess the *same* quality, namely, a "*Misoneism,*" an animosity to "novelty." As Lombroso endeavours to find everywhere similarities in epileptics and idiots to men of genius, we ought to conclude from the preceding statement that, according to Lombroso "ordinary persons," the great bulk of men. are epileptic and idiotic; in that case, there would be no normal people at all. This is, of course, not his meaning, but the instance shows how thoughtlessly he goes to work in marshalling his proofs.

[1] *Handbuch der Geisteskrankheiten*, 2. Auflage, 1880, pp. 243, 244 (im *Handbuch der speziellen Pathologie und Therapie*, herausgegeben von H. v. Ziemssen, Band XVI). — [2] *The Man of Genius*, p. 17.

Lombroso asserts, "The men who create new worlds are enemies of novelty," and "They display extraordinary energy in rejecting the discoveries of others, whether it is that the saturation, so to say, of their brains prevents any new absorption, or that they have acquired a special sensibility, alert only to their own ideas, and refractory to the ideas of others."[1]

Let us try to realise this absurdity: "the saturation of their brains prevents any new absorption," the saturation of the brains of men endowed with great genius. Lombroso imagines the brain to be like a vessel that overflows when too much is poured into it. Those who have a real knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the brain have nothing but ridicule for these views of Lombroso. A new idea does not claim so large a space in the brain as Lombroso seems to suppose, and precisely men of genius, who already possess an abundance of ideas, are the more capable of quickly grasping *new* ideas which then easily become connected with kindred ideas already present. The more intelligent a man is, the more quickly will he seize what is new: on the other hand, the lower the plane of thought is in a man, the less will he be able to turn his thoughts successfully in a new direction. Just as little can there be any question in men of genius of a "special sensibility, alert only to their own ideas, and refractory to the ideas of others." Only ordinary, average people have this "special sensibility, alert only to their own ideas," they only believe that they alone are always in the right, and when they occasionally succeed in hitting upon an insignificant thought, they fancy they have thereby accomplished a feat which will move the world. It is only "ordinary persons," average men, whose "special sensibility" was always "refractory to the ideas of others." It was always

[1] *The Man of Genius*, pp. 17, 18.

the obtuse and dull-witted crowd that uttered the cry of "Crucify!" whenever a great idea was born:

"The few, who thereof something really learned,
Unwisely frank, with hearts that spurned concealing,
And to the mob laid bare each thought and feeling,
Have evermore been crucified and burned." [1]

It is especially the man of genius who enters with the fullest devotion, with the most fervent enthusiasm, into the great thoughts of others, and strives to adopt what is best in all. It argues an incredible wrong-headedness to represent facts in the topsy-turvy manner of Lombroso. And what are his proofs? "Napoleon rejected steam [sic]," — that is, he refused to have anything to do with the invention of the steamer —" and Richelieu sent Salomon de Caus, its first inventor, to the Bicêtre." [2] In the first place it should be stated that de Caus' connection with the invention of steamers is a very remote one. In his book, "*Raisons des Forces Mouvantes*," published in 1615, he sketched an apparatus that was to raise water by means of steam. Why Richelieu had him imprisoned is not quite clear. It is unlikely that the cause was a mere aversion to innovations. But to go so far as to assume that Napoleon declined to make any use of the invention of the steamship either because "the saturation of his brains prevented any new absorption," or because he "had acquired a special sensibility, alert only to his own ideas, and refractory to the ideas of others," is an incredible absurdity. Naturally even the greatest genius has its limits. Napoleon did not recognise the significance of the invention of the steamer, otherwise nothing would probably have de-

[1] Goethe, *Faust*. Part I, Sc. i. — [2] *The Man of Genius*, p. 18. — Cp. Lombroso, *L'Uomo di Genio*, sesta edizione, 1894, p. 22: "*Napoleone respinse il vapore; e Richelieu mandò a Bicêtre il suo primo inventore, Salomone de Caus.*" *Vapore* means steam as well as steamer.

terred him from employing so powerful an agency in his deadly struggle with England. But Lombroso goes so far as to assert that men of genius "display extraordinary energy in rejecting the discoveries of others." How can it be imagined that Napoleon, who pursued his aims with the fiercest energy and to whom every means was welcome, "displayed extraordinary energy in rejecting the discoveries of others," such as that of the man who by the invention of the steamer afforded him the best means of acquiring the supremacy of the sea? That would indeed be stamping as an "idiot," or as one of those "ordinary persons," the mightiest man of action that ever lived, a man who possessed the keenest eye for the true nature of things and who made straight for his goal, undeterred by any prejudices whatsoever.

Lombroso's other proofs are on a level with these. So, for instance, the following: "Bacon laughed at Gilbert and Copernicus; he did not believe in the application of instruments, or even of mathematics, to the exact sciences."[1] To this the answer is, no sensible man will look upon even the greatest genius as infallible. Even the intellectual force and the energy of the greatest genius will in some respects have their limits. It is, however, not these restrictions, inherent in human nature, that form the essence of genius, as Lombroso suggests, but precisely where limitations begin, there genius ceases to exist. Even Christ did not consider Himself perfect: "Why callest thou me *good?* There is none good but one, that is God." The view that in a man like Bacon genius was confined within narrow bounds, and limitation of intellect and character preponderated, has in recent times found more and more favour. That he thought little of the discovery of Copernicus is therefore no proof

[1] *The Man of Genius*, p. 18.

that genius generally has a "*Misoneism*," an animosity to novelty, but only that Bacon had his limitations in this respect.

Bismarck once said that to refute one foolish thought, it would be necessary to write a whole book. According to this a complete refutation of Lombroso's hypothesis would mean the production of a vast library. But for one possessed of any insight, the hints here given will suffice. Reference may further be made to the excellent observations of William Hirsch[1] that refute many of Lombroso's errors in the most complete manner, and likewise to the interesting studies of the French physician Edouard Toulouse, who in a compendious work[2] produces the results of his scientifically exact medical investigations of Zola's physical and mental condition in proof of the fact that Lombroso's hypothesis, that every man of genius must necessarily also be an epileptic, has no scientific foundation whatever.

But those who delight in the "dazzling light-balls of the insane" and take them for flashes of genius, will continue to hold by the hypothesis of Lombroso and to measure genius and insanity by the same standard: for such there is no help. But time will be the judge. For unsound productions, although for a time upheld by advertisement and fashion, will ultimately sink into oblivion, but works of true genius are never out of date. As the latter are the outcome of great vital energy and great fulness of life, they are vivifying in their effect and promote mental sanity. Hence Goethe's advice that we should never allow a day to pass without reading, seeing, or hearing something beautiful. As long, therefore, as men exist, they will delight in that which has its origin in the fulness of life and the highest mental sanity of men of true genius.

[1] *Genie und Entartung. Eine psychologische Studie.* 2. Auflage, 1894. — [2] *Emile Zola,* 1896.

XI.

THE NARROW-MINDED MAN AND THE ANTISOPHY OF EGOISM: STIRNER, NIETZSCHE, AND IBSEN

IN his "Philosophical Letters" Schiller, after extolling love, says: "Many of our thinking brains have untertaken to drive out by mockery this heavenly instinct from the human soul, to efface the effigy of Deity in the soul, and to dissolve this energy, this noble enthusiasm, in the cold, killing breath of a pusillanimous indifference. Under the slavish influence of their own unworthiness they have entered into terms with self-interest, the dangerous foe of benevolence; they have done this to explain a phænomenon which was too godlike for their narrow hearts. They have spun their comfortless doctrine out of a miserable egotism, and they have made their own limits the measure of the Creator; degenerate slaves decrying freedom amidst the rattle of their own chains."[1]

It is with these dangerous thinkers that we are here going to deal, with thinkers who would substitute hate and selfishness for love and devotion, the ugly and base for the beautiful and exalted, falsehood for truth, and the "war of all against all" for peaceful intercourse and community of interests; who would, in short, everywhere

[1] *Æsthetical and Philosophical Essays.* Newly translated, 1910, p. 387.

replace order by disorder, by wild anarchy or tyranny, by complete lawlessness.

Now, if the assertion be correct that genius consists in nothing but true, unusually intensified interest or in genuine, disinterested love for the object with which the man of genius is occupied, then the direct opposite of genius, narrow-mindedness, can have its source in nothing but in narrowness or limitation of interest for the object, that is, in lack of true, devoted love, or according to circumstances, in want of truth in sensation, thought, or action.

Love strives after unity, after the union of what is manifold, diverse and opposed; hatred, on the contrary, separates what is united, severs the bond of common interests and destroys the connection of each separate member with the whole. Love unites, builds up, produces life and existence; hatred dissolves, destroys, and brings death and annihilation in its train.

But for a multiplicity of separate entities to join into a higher unity, to form a living whole or organism, each separate entity must subordinate itself to the idea of the whole, must take its place in the structure of the entire organism, and serve the common purpose, namely, that of higher unity. Each entity, therefore, simultaneously with its entrance into the higher unity, becomes subject to the law and order on which alone this higher unity depends. Hence all laws have reference only to a greater whole, of which the separate entity becomes a part, in conformity with these very laws themselves. The endeavour of single beings to join together into a higher unity, for a common purpose, to be fused into a higher life, this endeavour is called Love. Now, as each single being, on entering the higher unity, the higher life, has to subordinate itself to the law and order, or to the idea, on which the existence

of this higher unity depends, love must aim at the fulfilment of this law. For love, as has been said, is nothing but a striving or a desire for the existence of the higher unity, of the more perfect life. Therefore eternal love, personified in Jesus Christ, spoke the words, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil the law."

Now, if genius is naught but a true, unusually intensified interest or love for an object, the man of genius naturally keeps in view the fulfilment of the law, and not its destruction. The narrow-minded man, on the other hand, devoid of all-permeating interest and love, refuses to acknowledge any law, since he has no interest in the higher unity or the higher life, the existence of which depends entirely on the validity and force of these laws. The narrow-minded man is therefore by nature lawless, one who places himself beyond the pale of the law, a tyrant, or an anarchist. A loveless or selfish man only acknowledges what has immediate reference to his own perishable person, to his own limited self. Submission to a law on which the existence of a higher community depends, he considers an absurdity, simply because he lacks all understanding and every true interest for this higher community. But where there is no recognition of the authority of law, there the arbitrary will of the individual, lawlessness, disorder, tyranny, and anarchy hold sway. Egoism, tyranny, and anarchy, therefore, go hand in hand.

The antisophers, who exalt the selfishness, the arbitrary will of the individual, consequently also extol tyranny and anarchy in all domains, the revolt against all laws; and those who preach tyranny and anarchism simultaneously glorify selfish limitation or narrow-mindedness in the domain of art, in the province of science, and in practical life.

Among the antisophical representatives of selfish narrow-mindedness, Friedrich Nietzsche has lately become

widely known. But since he had a predecessor in Germany who, in somewhat different words, but very clearly and precisely, developed the same doctrine of anarchism, or of an individuality narrow-minded or limited to itself, let us first give this predecessor of Nietzsche's our attention.

His name was Caspar Schmidt, but he wrote under the pseudonym Max Stirner; he was a school teacher in Berlin and died there in the year 1856. In his chief work, entitled "Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum," (The Only One and his Property), first published in 1845, Stirner proclaims as the only principle of salvation undisguised selfishness together with revolt against all laws and ideals that may impose fetters on the selfish caprice of the individual. Above all he rebels against the moral commandment to love one's neighbour — which even in atheists finds expression in an upright life and in sympathy with the joys and sorrows of one's fellow-beings — and against all things connected with this commandment, such as genuine piety or love of God.

For Stirner, as for every other egoist, there exists only one divinity, that which is embodied in his own person. Every egoist looks upon himself as God, as "The Only One," — and "his Property" is the whole world, namely, in so far as it is subject to his caprice and he possesses the power of doing in it what he likes. But if the selfish man is unique in his kind, like God, then, like Him, he is also perfect, that is, free from all criticism and subordinate to no law. Every manifestation of the egoist's will, however absurd it may be, is therefore good in itself, like the manifestations of God's will. And since God, as the Only One, cannot be referred to a more general category or classified under any generic term, the selfish man, too, feels himself unique in his kind. Stirner expresses this as follows: "It is said of God, 'Names do not designate

Thee.' This applies also to me, the egoist. No terms express me, nothing that is alleged as being my nature, exhaustively describes me; they are only names. Likewise it is said of God that he is perfect, and has no occasion to strive after perfection. This also applies to me alone, to the egoist."[1]

But as little as the egoist needs to take God into account or to serve Him, since he himself, the egoist, is all in all—that is, God—so little need he take heed of the joys and sorrows of his fellow-men or in any way to sacrifice himself for, or to be enthusiastic about, anything, or to serve any higher unity or idea. For the egoist disparages himself by serving another being than himself; only when entirely confined within his own limits, only in all his narrowness does he remain faithful to himself and enjoy to the full his own personality. Stirner accordingly states: "Self-enjoyment becomes repugnant to me by the fact that I fancy I must serve another, that I imagine myself bound to him, that I consider myself called upon to show self-sacrifice, devotion, or enthusiasm. Well then, if I cease to serve any idea, any higher being, it follows naturally that I cease to serve any other man, but under all circumstances only myself. Thus I am, not merely by my actions or by my existence, but in my own consciousness, 'the Only One,'"[2] — namely, in so far as with full consciousness and not only instinctively, the egoist ceases to regard any other being, but solely and exclusively himself.

If every egoist is in himself entirely perfect like God, and subject neither to law nor to criticism, the word sin has naturally no meaning for him. Whatever the selfish man does is good: there is no longer any standard for his actions. Stirner asserts: "If religion has laid down the proposition, 'We are sinners, one and all,' I confront it

[1] *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum*, 2. Aufl., 1882, p. 378. — [2] Id. p. 373.

with another, 'We are perfect, one and all.' For each moment we are what we can be, and never need be anything more. As no defect attaches to us, sin has no meaning. Show me a sinner in the world, when no one is any longer required to satisfy a superior."[1]

If there exists for the egoist no law that he may not break, the word crime has no meaning for him, he may do everything with the greatest complacence, nay, in the very act of deriding and breaking the law, in committing crime, he sees the fullest enjoyment of his likeness to God. Stirner exclaims, addressing those who are moral and humane: "You are not as great as a criminal, for you commit no crime. You do not know that one's own self cannot help being criminal, that crime is life itself to the egoist."[2]

Since human society and the State cannot exist without obedience to laws, without consideration for others, without uprightness and humanity in individuals, Stirner, being averse to all compulsion by the law, opposes the existence of human society and of the State. He asserts: "If the State is a society of men and not a group of egoists, each one of whom has only *himself* in view, the State cannot exist without morality and must exact morality. Therefore the two of us, the State and myself, are enemies, I, the egoist, have no concern for the well-being of this 'human society,' I make no sacrifices to it, I only make use of it. But so as to be able to make full use of it, I transform it into my property and my creature, that is, I destroy it and form in its place an association of egoists,"[3] — who, like a pack of wolves, hold together only for the purpose of hunting down their prey.

[1] *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum*, 2. Auflage, 1882, p. 371. — [2] Id. p. 207. — [3] Id. p. 183.

Just as Stirner has no respect for the laws of humanity, so also he does not recognise the laws of thought as binding. Reason and truth, in their usual sense, do not exist for him. Therefore he says: "Even if there were only one truth, to which man had to devote his life, because he is a man, he would be subject to rule, to authority, to law, &c., he would be a bondman; for instance, man, humanity, freedom, &c. are said to be such truths."[1] Further: "As long as you believe in truth, you do not believe in yourself, and you are a — *servant*, a — *religious man*."[2] Further: "Truth is dead, is a letter, a word, a substance that I can use up. All truth in itself is dead, is a corpse. It is alive only in the same manner in which my lungs are alive, namely in the measure that I myself am 'alive.' Truths are substances like useful and useless herbs. The decision of the question whether they are useful or useless herbs lies with me."[3] Again: "Truths are only phrases, modes of speech, words (*λόγος*); brought into connection or placed in rank and file, they form logic, science, philosophy."[4]

Stirner is an *antisopher*, a conscious opponent of *sophia* (*σοφία*), of wisdom, of truth.

Let us now turn to his successor. Friedrich Nietzsche was a professor of ancient languages at the university of Basle. A serious disorder of the eyes and head compelled him to resign his chair. In 1889 he became insane and died in 1900. He did not, like Stirner, confine himself to one chief work, but in a whole series of books preached revolt against all laws, and extolled the most consistent tyranny and anarchism. Nietzsche, like Stirner, denies every obligation of man to be considerate towards his neighbour. Nay, he is even convinced that love, con-

[1] *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum*, 2. Auflage, 1882, p. 360. — [2] Id. p. 365. — [3] Id. p. 366. — [4] Id. p. 359.

sideration for others, and goodness are nothing but weakness. According to Nietzsche, "Jewish-Christian morality," with its commandment to love one's neighbour, is a "morality of slaves," and he only is a "master," an "aristocrat," who, like Stirner's egoist, disregards all restraint, acknowledges no commandment or law, and follows only his own caprice. For this selfish caprice Nietzsche coined the high-sounding terms "instinct of freedom" and "will to power." The freedom that Nietzsche means is the freedom to do what one likes, without the slightest regard for others, that is, freedom based on such complete selfishness, that it ultimately cannot be restrained, even by the fear of hard punishment, from breaking the law and committing crime.

Nietzsche, like Stirner, honours in the criminal the man who is untrammelled by any regard for law, justice, or charity, that is, the egoist *par excellence*. Nietzsche says: "The advocates of a criminal are seldom artists enough to turn the beautiful terribleness of the deed to the advantage of the doer."[1] Further: "The criminal is often enough not equal to his deed: he extenuates and maligns it."[2]

Imagine, on these lines, a speech for the defence such as the following: "Gentlemen of the jury, the accused pleads guilty to having committed a murder: I request you, however, to consider how horribly beautiful his crime is. From a sheer passion for murder — because, as our great Nietzsche says, "his soul wanted blood... he thirsted for the happiness of the knife"[3] — he decoyed a child to a lonely place, and slowly killed it with exquisite tortures. Neither the innocently terrified looks of the child, the

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XII, p. 91 (*Beyond Good and Evil*. Translated by H. Zimmern, 3rd. ed., 1911). — [2] Id. p. 91. — [3] Id. vol. XI, p. 41. (*Thus Spake Zarathustra*, transl. by Th. Common, 1911).

little hands convulsively clasped in despair, the small body trembling and twitching with pain, nor the pitifully beseeching voice and the frightful cries of the little creature writhing in an agonising death could touch this man's heart. What sternness and decision of character he here showed. To whom would it come easy to imitate him? Who would not rather commit suicide than inflict such terrible suffering on a poor little creature? Gentlemen of the jury, I pray you to admire this man's strength of mind, 'the beautiful terribleness of the deed,' as our famous antisopher calls it, and further beg you to consider what this man would have been able to accomplish, had he been born to a throne."

In some such manner an "advocate" who is an "artist," as Nietzsche expresses it, might "turn the beautiful terribleness of the deed to the advantage of the doer."

That the above is no exaggeration, that the cruel murderer's counsel really speaks according to Nietzsche's mind, is shown by our author's assertion that the fundamental and primitive instinct of man is the impulse to cruelty. Nietzsche says: "In my opinion it is repugnant to the delicacy, and still more to the hypocrisy of tame domestic animals (that is, modern men; that is, ourselves), to realise with all their energy the extent to which *cruelty* constituted the great joy and delight of ancient man, was an ingredient which seasoned nearly all his pleasures, and conversely the extent of the naïveté and innocence with which he manifested his need for cruelty, when he actually made as a matter of principle 'disinterested malice' into a *normal* characteristic of man.

"At any rate the time is not so long past when it was impossible to conceive of royal weddings and national festivals on a grand scale, without executions, tortures,

or perhaps an *auto-da-fé*, or similarly to conceive of an aristocratic household, without a creature to serve as a butt for the cruel and malicious baiting of the inmates. The sight of suffering does one good, the infliction of suffering does one more good."[1]

Thus Nietzsche glorifies moral narrowness, and as the real morality of "masters" contrasts it with the morality of Christianity or that of upright and humane men, a conception that he endeavours to make despicable by calling it a "Jewish-Christian morality of slaves."

But next to moral narrowness it is intellectual shallowness, narrowness of thought, for which Nietzsche, like Stirner, enters the lists. Reason, truth, and science are driven from the throne, and, according to Nietzsche as well as to Stirner, foolish caprice, self-chosen narrowness, unreason, lying, error, and blindness in the realm of thought are set up in their place. Nietzsche says: "The belief on which our faith in science is based has remained to this day a metaphysical belief — even we knowers of to-day, we godless foes of metaphysics, we too take our fire from that conflagration which was kindled by a thousand-year old faith, from that Christian belief, which was also Plato's belief, the belief that God is truth, that truth is *divine*. But what if this belief becomes more and more incredible, what if nothing proves itself to be divine, unless it be error, blindness, lies?"[2]

This is the expression of genuine, unadulterated *antisophy*, the hatred of truth.

That Nietzsche really rejects reason and truth, in order to be able to glorify selfish caprice and narrowness of every kind, is proved by his words, "A sign of strong char-

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, pp. 73, 74 (*The Genealogy of Morals*. Translated by H. B. Samuel, 1910). — [2] Id. vol. XIII, p. 197.

acter, when once the resolution has been taken, to shut the ear even to the best counter-arguments," — that is, to listen to no reason or truth. "Occasionally, therefore, a will to stupidity."[1]

Thus the stupidity of the selfish man who will neither see nor hear what lies clearly before him, because it runs counter to his selfish interests, is according to Nietzsche one of the attributes of his ideal of the superman. Since science is founded on reason and truth, it, too, must fall; for it interferes with the anarchistic thinker's personal option, it shows him his smallness in the infinite universe, his dependence on the eternal laws of being. But he, as an egoist, as unique in his kind, does not want to be insignificant and dependent, he wants to feel himself as God. Hence he will not acknowledge that the whole great earth is only a speck of dust in the infinite space of worlds. For him, for the egoist, the earth must be fixed in the centre of the world, and he again wants to be the centre of this earth! Away, therefore, with modern astronomy, too, which, according to Kant's confession annihilates one's own importance. Nietzsche says: "Has there not been since the time of Copernicus an unbroken progress in the self-belittling of man and his *will* for belittling himself? All science nowadays sets out to talk man out of his present opinion of himself, as though that opinion had been nothing but a bizarre piece of conceit."[2] Just as Stirner denies all morality and all truth, so Nietzsche sees in the maxim of the oriental Order of Assassins the highest expression of what he understands by "freedom of thought." The maxim referred to is: "Nothing is true, everything is allowed."[3]

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XII, p. 91. — [2] Id. vol. XIII, p. 201. — [3] Id. vol. XIII, p. 195.

Not only in action and thought, but in sensation, too, Nietzsche extols selfish caprice and narrowness as the only valid principle. Kant has defined the beautiful as that which pleases generally and without interesting, that is, without interesting in a selfish, personal way. In opposition to this, Nietzsche declares only that as beautiful to himself, which he desires to consider beautiful, namely, that which flatters his senses or is in any way subservient to his craving for enjoyment or to his vanity. Anything beautiful in itself does not exist for him. He laughs at those who are simple enough to believe that an artist admires in his model only the ideal form, and he praises Stendhal for defining the beautiful as "*une promesse de bonheur*," [1] as a promise of happiness, of pleasure. But this pleasure may consist for the egoist, if he is an artist, in the fact, that consciously he makes light of all æsthetic rules, so as to wound the sense of beauty by what is unæsthetic, ugly, and base. Thus personal caprice and anarchy are also introduced into the realm of art.

In Nietzsche's opinion the fundamental and primitive instinct of man is the "instinct of freedom," that is, the impulse to attain unlimited freedom to do whatever one pleases, in other words the most boundless caprice. He also calls it the "will to power," namely, the executioner's feeling of power over his victim, so strikingly presented by Dostoieffsky in a passage of his "Memoirs from the House of the Dead," namely, that boundless, brutal selfishness that can only be satisfied to the full by another being's cruel, agonising death. The more vividly the executioner realises the torments, terror, and anguish of his victim, the more intensely will he, by contrast, sense the enjoyment of his own life. If this horrible impulse, the "will to power," cannot discharge itself outwardly, but

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 131.

is forcibly suppressed, it will turn inward, according to Nietzsche; in this case a man will seek to satisfy his irresistible impulse to cruelty by treating *himself* cruelly, by torturing his own mind, and this is, in Nietsche's opinion, what we call a bad conscience. Man is compelled to find an outlet for his cruelty, this, according to the antisopher, is indispensable to true life; for not until the man of bestial impulses treads another in the dust does he feel his power, and this consciousness of power heightens his own feeling of life. Now, if a man is prevented by outward restraint from trampling down a fellow-being, he cannot give effect to his "will to power" in any other way than by tormenting and debasing himself. Whereas otherwise he would have looked down with contempt upon his fellow-men, he now despises himself, considers himself a reprobate, laden with guilt, in a word, he has a bad conscience. Accordingly, in Nietzsche's opinion, the bad conscience is only the result of outward restraint, and hence is something contrary to nature, something morbid. He believes it arose at a time when a section of humanity was forcibly brought under the yoke and pressed into a political organisation within which it was no longer possible for men outwardly to give full play to "their awful joy and intense delight in all destruction, in all the ecstasies of victory and cruelty."[1]

Nietzsche says: "I regard the bad conscience as the serious illness which man was bound to contract under the stress of the most radical change which he has ever experienced — that change, when he found himself finally imprisoned within the pale of society and of peace. Just like the plight of the water-animals, when they were compelled either to become land-animals or to perish, so was the plight of these half-animals, perfectly adapted as they

[1] *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 41.

were to the savage life of war, prowling, and adventure — suddenly all their instincts were rendered worthless and 'switched off.'" And "those old instincts had not immediately ceased their demands! Only it was difficult and rarely possible to gratify them: speaking broadly, they were compelled to satisfy themselves by new and, as it were, hole-and-corner methods. All instincts which do not find a vent without, *turn inwards* — this is what I mean by the growing 'internalisation' of man: consequently we have the first growth in man, of what subsequently was called his soul. The whole inner world, originally as thin as if it had been stretched between two layers of skin, burst apart and expanded proportionately, and obtained depth, breadth, and height, when man's external outlet became *obstructed.* These terrible bulwarks, with which the social organisation protected itself against the old instincts of freedom (punishments belong pre-eminently to these bulwarks), brought it about that all those instincts of wild, free, prowling man became turned backwards *against man himself.* Enmity, cruelty, the delight in persecution, in surprises, change, destruction — the turning all these instincts against their own possessors: this is the origin of the 'bad conscience.' It was man, who, lacking external enemies and obstacles, and imprisoned as he was in the oppressive narrowness and monotony of custom, in his own impatience lacerated, persecuted, gnawed, frightened, and ill-treated himself; it was this animal in the hands of the tamer, which beat itself against the bars of its cage; it was this being who, pining and yearning for that desert home of which it had been deprived, was compelled to create out of its own self, an adventure, a torture-chamber, a hazardous and perilous desert — it was this fool, this homesick and desperate prisoner — who invented the 'bad conscience.'

But thereby he introduced that most grave and sinister illness, from which mankind has not yet recovered, the suffering of man from the disease called man, as the result of a violent breaking from his animal past, the result, as it were, of a spasmodic plunge into a new environment and new conditions of existence, the result of a declaration of war against the old instincts, which up to that time had been the staple of his power, his joy, his formidableness."[1]

Nietzsche's explanation of the origin of bad conscience as due to the impulse towards cruelty and destruction, being driven inward, affords the best proof of the fact that his fixed idea of the "transvaluation of all values," of the necessary rejection of all disinterested stirrings in the human heart, and of all social, altruistic impulses, sprang from mental derangement. For when morbid, immoral, criminal impulses are present, their non-satisfaction produces pain and torment. This non-satisfaction, however, may have a twofold cause, an outer and an inner one, according as the realisation of the criminal desire, of the delight in destruction, is thwarted by a restraint operating from the outside, or by the resistance of the better, moral impulses still present in one's own mind. Every non-satisfaction of a tormenting, urgent impulse, every renunciation of a fervent desire, appears to the individual concerned as an act of cruelty on the part of him who hinders the satisfaction of the impulse or the realisation of the desire, and the cruelty seems the greater, the stronger the impulse, the more fervent and powerful the desire is, and the more it fills the whole mind. To the morally weak-minded man, one whose moral instincts, in comparison with his immoral impulses, are so imperfectly developed that they either succumb

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, pp. 99-101.

altogether in the conflict of feelings or at least render the maintenance of the moral character difficult and painful, to such a man both the outer force that restrains his morbid caprice, and the inner resistance of the inherited and acquired moral instincts to the satisfaction of the delight in destruction appear as acts of cruelty. That is, in the one case, it appears to him an act of cruelty on the part of the people around him, on the part of society, whose opposite interests and moral feelings form an outward check on his arbitrary instincts, on his "will to power," in the other case as cruelty against himself, as self-torment, self-humiliation, self-laceration, as "asceticism." The morally weak-minded man escapes from the outward restraint of society by avoiding men, and as, at the same time, this restraint appears to him the cruelty of society, he will hate society, the state, and mankind.

The *inner* restraint, on the contrary, the resistance of innate and acquired moral impulses to the satisfaction of immoral capricious instincts or the "will to power," is accompanied, on the one hand, by the wish for a quicker, more violent liberation from this self-torment, for deliverance from this terrible inner struggle by suicide. Nietzsche says: "The thought of suicide is a great consolation: by means of it one gets successfully through many a bad night."[1] On the other hand the inner restraint suggests the wish for a settlement of the conflict by a suppression of the innate and acquired moral impulses that hinder the satisfaction of the inhuman instincts and still preponderate just to such an extent that only with trouble and difficulty the moral habit is preserved. To this end the sufferer, with all the sagacity which sometimes is preserved in such cases of mental disorder, seeks to justify to himself the immoral, criminal,

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XII, p. 98.

inhuman impulses, and to represent them as the natural rights of the individual in opposition to society, while on the other hand he endeavours to cast contempt on those contrary to them, namely, the resistant moral, altruistic impulses, which in his opinion are based on cowardly weakness or mere imagination. This mode of justifying the aberration of moral feeling by reasoning is frequently observed by psychiatrists in their patients.

In this respect Schüle observes: "In general we see in this reasoning form of mental disease the combination of relative soundness of the process of thinking, of the power of forming judgments and conclusions, with derangement of the feelings and impulses. Such a combination may occur simultaneously or it may occur successively, that is, in such a manner that the logical function is influenced by the prevailing disturbance in the impulses and emotions, and is summoned up merely to clothe, *a posteriori*, in psychic motives, that is, to justify what the organic motives had previously and independently accomplished. This is the real illusion of the moral critique, which is corrupted by the bribe of an organic motive; psychologically expressed: the modification and corruption of logical activity by the preponderating influence of a morbid (organic) premise. The intellect has become the *advocatus diaboli* of morbid moods and impulses. This *modus ratiocinandi* expresses itself in ways dependent on the degree of each individual's total mental power. In conditions of mental debility it assumes the form of clumsy evasion, of brutal or silly justification that seizes upon any, even the most absurd, motive; in states of vigorous excitement, on the other hand, it appears as subtlety that is unembarrassed by any objections, that knows how to combine everything, that adds and deducts, as the case may require, until it fits

in with the well-arranged whole and with the purpose previously forced upon it. This is 'madness with a method,' ingenious narrow-mindedness."[1]

We are aware that Nietzsche "knows how to combine everything" most admirably and that he employs an incomparable "subtlety" in justifying the morbid, immoral, inhuman impulses as the only sound, good, noble and aristocratic ones.

Schüle says further: "Only on the basis of innate or of acquired serious mental defects does this peculiar blending of the healthy with the morbid mental life develop itself, by which the latter in its abnormal moods is elevated to the first premise of the formal intellectual processes, and the organic motive unconsciously to the position of the proton pseudos of a logical reasoning carefully cut to its measure. Just as the restless sophistry, the too keen dialectic, and the urgent tendency to disputation sufficiently indicate the impelling organic stimulus, which has encroached upon the field of conceptions, so the unsusceptibility to the logic of others shows great mental debility in spite of all sagacity, while the mutual compatibility of healthy and morbid conceptions and views manifests the inner discord, the double life always characteristic of a fundamentally morbid nature... the anomaly under discussion is designated as *folie raisonnante*... Looked at from a psychological point of view the characteristic symptom of disease of this anomaly concealed beneath the most deceptive mask of mental sanity, is found to consist firstly in the compulsion with which, in opposition to all evidence and unsusceptible to all logical resistance, it carries out its task of justification in the rigidly prescribed direction,

[1] *Handbuch der Geisteskrankheiten*, 2. Auflage, 1880, p. 74 (im *Handbuch der speziellen Pathologie und Therapie*, herausgegeben von H. v. Ziemssen, Bd. XVI).

and secondly in the complete change of front of the psychic mechanism which, in this halting dialectic, suffers the unhappiest of hysteron proterons of the elementary processes of 'action.'"[1]

This applies exactly to Nietzsche's whole "ingeniously narrow-minded" method of reasoning. The greater the morally weak-minded man's mental endowments, the more subtle will be his reasoning, the better will he "know how to combine everything," so as to justify the immoral, destructive impulses, the more "method will there be in his madness." In this respect Nietzsche may be said to have accomplished wonders. His "ingenious narrow-mindedness" is simply phenomenal.

The mentally disordered antisopher then, unless he chooses the violent release by suicide, seeks to escape from this painful inner discord of the heart, from the struggle of the human, social instincts against the destructive impulses, by endeavouring to weaken and depreciate the innate as well as the acquired moral and social instincts and to render them contemptible to himself, as if they were based only on cowardly weakness or mere imagination. The resistance of the social instincts and impulses in his heart to the fervent desire to give rein to his destructive, anarchical caprices, appears to the morally weak-minded man as an act of cruelty to himself. This self-torment would cease the moment the selfish, immoral instinct met with no inner resistance on the part of the disinterested, social impulses, that is, when the destructive "will to power" could find some unhindered outward expression, as in the annihilation of some other living being, in every kind of destruction, in incendiarism, rape,

[1] *Handbuch der Geisteskrankheiten*, 2. Auflage, 1880, p. 75. (*Handbuch der speziellen Pathologie und Therapie*, herausgegeben von H. v. Ziemssen, Bd. XVI).

robbery, torture, &c. Compare Nietzsche's joyous description of the "good" ones, according to *his* acceptation of the word "good": "These men are in reference to what is outside their circle (where the foreign element, a *foreign* country, begins), not much better than beasts of prey, which have been let loose. They enjoy there freedom from all social control, they feel that in the wilderness they can give vent with impunity to that tension which is produced by enclosure and imprisonment in the peace of society, they *revert* to the innocence of the beast-of-prey conscience, like jubilant monsters, who perhaps come from a ghastly bout of murder, arson, rape, and torture, with bravado and a moral equanimity, as though merely some wild student's prank had been played, perfectly convinced that the poets have now an ample theme to sing and celebrate. It is impossible not to recognise at the core of all these aristocratic races the beast of prey; the magnificent *blonde brute,* avidly rampant for spoil and victory; this hidden core needed an outlet from time to time, the beast must get loose again, must return into the wilderness."[1]

Now, it is Nietzsche's opinion that the inner self-torment of a morally weak-minded person is cruelty practised on himself, and that this again is nothing but the cruelty originally natural to man, forming his primitive impulse or instinct, the natural outlet of which is obstructed and which, therefore, turns inward, seeing that, as it is the primitive impulse or instinct of man, it cannot be arrested or eradicated and must somehow come into active operation.

The error in this reckoning, the "narrowness" here consists in the fact that Nietzsche generalises his own inner experience, and, though it is founded on mental

[1] *The Complete Works,* ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 39, 40.

disturbance, presents it as the normal condition of man. For inner torment as the result of the non-satisfaction of particular impulses, in this case of inhuman, destructive impulses, can only be felt when these impulses are present in the mind, or, more correctly, when they have been set free from their latent condition and have developed their full strength. A disposition to selfish, inhuman, destructive impulses is indeed present in the heart of everyone; but the greater one's mental sanity, one's inner equanimity, and the harmony of all one's psychic functions are, the less will be the importance of the disorganising, destructive, and selfish impulses, and the more will they have the character of mere rudiments, of mere imperfectly developed, feeble remnants. The energy they still possess will be so slight, their endeavour to find realisation will be so faint, that their non-realisation will excite either a scarcely perceptible degree of dissatisfaction or none at all. In the mind of the perfectly sane man the productive, social, altruistic impulses possess the greatest energy, and hence it is their non-satisfaction which produces the greatest pain; this is the bad conscience as it has hitherto been understood by everyone. But Nietzsche calls a bad conscience the pain arising from the non-satisfaction of a disorganising, selfish, destructive impulse, a non-satisfaction resulting from the resistance of the residue of the social, productive, altruistic impulses in one's own heart. Consequently, according to Nietzsche, the bad conscience is a proof of the fact that man inflicts pain on himself, behaves cruelly towards himself, when he cannot be cruel to others, that is, the bad conscience is nothing but cruelty, the "instinct of freedom," or the "will to power," turned inward. But our antisopher fails to observe that when the really sane man does not vent his cruelty outwardly, it does not, on that account, turn inward, because in this

case no disorganising, destructive, morbid impulse is present. A non-satisfaction of this non-existing impulse naturally cannot cause any pain, a pain that Nietzsche traces to an act of cruelty committed against oneself, if the hindrance to the venting of destructive impulses is found in one's own heart. On the contrary, when in momentary excitement, in rage, anger or passion, the sane man allows himself to be carried away into committing any evil action, he will be tormented by the greatest anguish of mind, as soon as this momentary excitement subsides, because the strong moral will lying deep within his heart has been offended, because his productive, social, altruistic instinct has been checked and interrupted. Thus in the sane man the gratification of cruelty, of the destructive instincts, directed outward, does not lead to a cessation of inward torment, as in the morally weak-minded man, but, on the contrary, to a strong mental pain. The absurdity and narrowness of Nietzsche's "ingenious" explanation of bad conscience are plainly evident here; for if the impulse towards cruelty or destruction were really fundamental in man, and if, as Nietzsche thinks, it operated either in an outward *or* inward direction, it would be hard to conceive how this primary impulse towards cruelty, the "instinct of freedom," or "will to power" could at the same time be effective in both directions, that is, how cruelty venting itself outwardly, could at the same time turn inward against the person himself in the bad conscience.

But here the "*folie raisonnante*" again vividly asserts itself, "that subtlety" of the morally weak-minded man, "which is unembarrassed by any objections." Nietzsche, namely, asserts that all disinterestedness (therefore also when it produces not pain, but the purest delight and the highest happiness) is at the same time self-denial, self-

humiliation, self-abasement, self-tyranny, self-torture, that is, after all, cruelty which has turned inward, since it could not have found vent outwardly in humiliating, tyrannising or torturing others.

To this the answer is: When a man performs a disinterested act, that is, when he behaves justly or considerately or affectionately towards his neighbour, and does so willingly and joyfully, this moral action is based on a natural impulse, on a social instinct which, when it is satisfied and attains its object, produces pleasure, happiness or alleviation by a removal of the tension, just as in the case of any other impulse, such for instance as that towards murder, rape, or torture. (Compare Darwin's statement: "Man a social animal. The more enduring social instincts conquer the less persistent instincts."[1]) It all depends on the nature of the object to which man's mind is directed; for whether it be something good or something bad, its attainment will always cause pleasure, its non-attainment will cause pain. Therefore the good man, that is, the man gifted with strong social, productive impulses is not, as Nietzsche thinks, a weakling or a "slave," nor is the bad man, possessed of strong destructive, selfish instincts the really superior, the truly strong man, the "master," but the reverse is the case. The amount of energy, indeed, may be as large in a good as in a bad man, only it is differently distributed in each with respect to the social and to the selfish impulses. In one man the total amount of energy may be concentrated on the social impulses, in another on the selfish ones. In the former case the result is a man of the highest excellence, in the latter a brute, a monster. Darwin also says: "A man who possessed no trace of such social feelings would be an unnatural monster."

[1] *The Descent of Man*, 1909, p. 165-183.

One man may, therefore, be strong in what is good, another in what is evil. The difference is only this, that in the course of his development the man endowed with social impulses will preserve his existence, but the brutal man will perish. The stronger the social instinct is, the greater will be the happiness caused by its satisfaction. The greater, therefore, a man's mental sanity and harmony, and the more his whole energy is centred in social, altruistic instincts, the happier will he be, the more fully will he enjoy his life, the less reason will he have for avoiding and hating others, the less reason also for fleeing from and hating himself. He only is really cruel to himself who is cruel to others. Hence in all who are morally diseased is found, together with the lust for destruction directed outward, the impulse towards self-destruction, towards suicide. We may compare with this Nietzsche's remark: "The thought of suicide is a great consolation: by means of it one gets successfully through many a bad night."[1] Whereas in the man of true genius the thought of suicide presents itself only occasionally and is soon subdued, the weak-minded man will actually carry it out or will be permanently dominated by it.

Let us now consider what deductions Nietzsche draws from his conception of the origin of a bad conscience, constantly led, as he is, by his instinctive aversion to society and to every disinterested devotion of the heart.

Justice, law, and order in a state, nay, the state itself, are, according to Nietzsche, things violently forced upon men, not things that have arisen in comformity with nature. He observes: "To talk of intrinsic right and intrinsic wrong is absolutely nonsensical; intrinsically, an injury, an oppression, an exploitation, an annihilation

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XII, p. 98.

can be nothing wrong, inasmuch as life is *essentially* (that is, in its cardinal functions) something which functions by injuring, oppressing, exploiting, and annihilating, and is absolutely inconceivable without such a character. It is necessary to make an even more serious confession: — viewed from the most advanced biological standpoint, conditions of legality can be only *exceptional conditions*, in that they are partial restrictions of the real life-will, which makes for power."[1]

His idea of the origin of the "State" is explained by Nietzsche as follows: "I used the word 'State': my meaning is self-evident, namely, a herd of blonde beasts of prey, a race of conquerors and masters, which with all its warlike organisation and all its organising power pounces with its terrible claws on a population, in numbers possibly tremendously superior, but as yet formless, as yet nomad. Such is the origin of the 'State.' That fantastic theory that makes it begin with a contract is, I think, disposed of. He who can command, he who is a master by 'nature,' he who comes on the scene forceful in deed and gesture — what has he to do with contracts? Such beings defy calculation, they come like fate, without cause, reason, notice, excuse, they are there like the lightning is there, too terrible, too sudden, too convincing, too 'different,' to be personally even hated. Their work is an instinctive creating and impressing of forms, they are the most involuntary, unconscious artists that there are: — their appearance produces instantaneously a scheme of sovereignty which is *live*, in which the functions are partitioned and apportioned, in which above all no part is received or finds a place, until pregnant with a 'meaning' in regard to the whole. They are ignorant of the meaning of guilt, responsibility, consideration, are these born organisers;

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 88.

in them predominates that terrible artist-egoism, that gleams like brass, and that knows itself justified to all eternity, in its work, even as a mother in her child. It is not in *them* that there grew the bad conscience, that is elementary — but it would not have grown *without them*, repulsive growth as it was, it would be missing, had not a tremendous quantity of freedom been expelled from the world by the stress of their hammerstrokes, their artist violence, or been at any rate made invisible and, as it were, *latent*. This *instinct of freedom* forced into being latent — it is already clear — this instinct of freedom forced back, trodden back, imprisoned within itself, and finally only able to find vent and relief in itself; this, only this, is the beginning of the 'bad conscience.' "[1]

In order to carry out their violent conquests, the conquerors must agree among themselves; they must hold together and be organised for warlike purposes; and this "warlike organisation" naturally entails a restraint: the "masters," the conquerors, cannot rend one another to pieces without perishing in a body, they must therefore be considerate and good to, and cannot turn their savage cruelty against, one another; likewise, within their own domain, they must, in order to avoid suffering any diminution of their enjoyments or comforts, practise forbearance, to a certain extent, towards their slaves; therefore they have to bridle their wild, cruel desires regarding their subordinates and to a certain extent must be good to them. But the "masters" seek compensation for this abroad. Compare the above quoted passage: "These men are in reference to what is outside their circle (where the foreign element, a *foreign* country begins), not much better than beasts of prey, which have been let loose;"[2] &c.

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 103. — [2] Id. vol. XIII, p. 39, 40.

The fact that the conquerors, although wild beasts abroad, yet within their political organisation showed consideration for one another, and to a certain extent also spared their subordinates, and did not simply rend one another and their slaves to pieces, evidently implies, if we are to draw the final consequences of Nietzsche's idea, that they had already fallen away from their superior brutal nature which, in its purest, ideal form, suffers subjection to no sort of restraint, and knows no limit to its extravagant "instinct of freedom" or to its dreadful "will to power." For, according to Nietzsche, "conditions of legality can be only *exceptional conditions*." [1]

This falling away from the true and ideal brutal nature was bound to revenge itself, and the process was as follows: The subordinates, the slaves, who were no longer able to manifest their savage cruelty outwardly, who were deprived of all prospect of feeling themselves, on their part, as free wild beasts and, like their "masters," to revel in "a ghastly bout of murder, arson, rape, and torture," [2] made a virtue of necessity, as Nietzsche thinks. In order to avoid sinking into utter despair at the loss of their freedom, and in order to revenge themselves, at the same time, in an intellectual way, they persuaded themselves that what they had lost was not a true, but a deceptive freedom, and endeavoured to instil this lie also into the minds of their oppressors, their "masters." The true freedom, the "slaves" asserted, is the inner freedom from all wild passions and brutal instincts. So what formerly they considered "good" and worth striving for, namely, the freedom unreservedly to follow their murderous, bestial impulses, they now declared to be "evil" or "wicked." But what they had formerly considered bad, namely, every restriction of their brutally wild im-

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 88. — [2] Id. vol. XIII, p. 40.

pulses, they now, forced by necessity, declared to be laudable, worth striving for, "good." Thus they lied away, thinks Nietzsche, their misery, gave rein to their impulses towards cruelty by tormenting themselves, and at the same time took a "clever revenge" on their oppressors by endeavouring to cast contempt on the "masters'" acts and conduct. What had formerly been the ideal of the "slaves" too, namely, a boundless caprice, and a hideous power of doing what they liked, was now rejected, since its realisation was recognised by them as impossible, and in its stead another and entirely opposite ideal, one that Nietzsche thinks fictitious and unnatural, was set up, namely, the ideal of disinterested love, of complete devotion of the heart to an act (goodness), or to a thought (truth), or to an impression (beauty). Nietzsche calls it "the ascetic ideal,"[1] because all that is good, true, and beautiful is based on a disinterested devotion of the heart, that is, in Nietzsche's opinion, on "asceticism, disinterestedness, self-denial, self-sacrifice." Man deprived of his wild liberty, who could no longer trample down, destroy, torment, or sacrifice others, now tormented, renounced, and sacrificed himself. The brutal impulse of cruelty, debarred from showing itself outwardly, withdrew inward and turned against man himself; he now trampled himself into the dust, he disparaged himself, he became altruistic, disinterested, objective.

Thus, according to Nietzsche, arose the "ascetic ideal" of the Christian religion. Compare his words: "When the oppressed, down-trodden, and overpowered say to themselves with the vindictive guile of weakness, 'Let us be otherwise than the evil, namely, good! and good is every one who does not oppress, who hurts no one, who does not

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, pp. 119-211.

attack, who does not pay back, who hands over revenge to God, who holds himself, as we do, in hiding; who goes out of the way of evil, and demands, in short, little from life; like ourselves the patient, the meek, the just,' — yet all this, in its cold and unprejudiced interpretation, means nothing more than 'once for all, the weak are weak; it is good to do *nothing for which we are not strong enough,*' but this dismal state of affairs, this prudence of the lowest order, which even insects possess (which in a great danger are fain to sham death so as to avoid doing 'too much'), has, thanks to the counterfeiting and self-deception of weakness, come to masquerade in the pomp of an ascetic, mute, and expectant virtue, just as though the *very* weakness of the weak — that is, forsooth, its *being*, its working, its whole unique inevitable inseparable reality — were a voluntary result, something wished, chosen, a deed, an act of *merit.*" [1]

Yet the corruption, the falling away from the natural animal instincts and brutal ideals was transmitted from the "slaves," the inferiors, to the "masters," the ruling race. Indeed these also, if not to the same extent as the "slaves," had fallen away from their true ideals, for they also accommodated themselves to a certain restraint by acting with forbearance and consideration towards one another and towards their "slaves," too, behaving not at all like wild beasts, but like domesticated animals. Thus, prepared as the "masters" were, they easily became accessible to the deceptive ideals of the "slaves," so that now, according to Nietzsche, they considered those things good that really were evil, and *vice versa*. The consequence was that the "masters," too, degenerated more and more, that is to say, that they became constantly more humane, considerate, affectionate, and disinterested, and

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, pp. 46, 47.

that they neglected the "beast of prey, the blonde brute,"[1] within themselves. In this way those who had at first been subdued and enslaved had not only lied themselves out of their misery, and satisfied their impulse of cruelty by self-torment, but at the same time revenged themselves on their oppressors by transferring to the latter their disease, namely, a bad conscience, and thus instilling into them the false ideals that produced a reversal of that relative position which, according to Nietzsche, was the natural and healthy one, so that finally the "slaves" obtained the chief authority in the domain of the intellect. The "morality of the slaves" (the morality of humanity) triumphed over the "morality of the masters" (the morality of criminals and brutes).

The people who have best known, according to Nietzsche, how to turn their ideals into falsehood, to make good of evil and evil of good, are the Jews. He says: "All the world's efforts against the 'aristocrats,' the 'mighty,' the 'masters,' the 'holders of power,' are negligible by comparison with what has been accomplished against those classes by *the Jews* — the Jews, that priestly nation which eventually realised that the one method of effecting satisfaction on its enemies and tyrants was by means of a radical transvaluation of values, which was at the same time an act of the *cleverest revenge*. Yet the method was only appropriate to a nation of priests, to a nation of the most jealously nursed priestly revengefulness. It was the Jews who, in opposition to the aristocratic equation (good = aristocratic = beautiful = happy = loved by the gods), dared with a terrifying logic to suggest the contrary equation, and indeed to maintain with the teeth of the most profound hatred (the hatred of weakness) this contrary equation, namely, 'the wretched are

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 40.

alone the good; the poor, the weak, the lowly, are alone the good; the suffering, the needy, the sick, the loathsome, are the only ones who are pious, the only ones who are blessed, for them alone is salvation — but you, on the other hand, you aristocrats, you men of power, you are to all eternity the evil, the horrible, the covetous, the insatiate, the godless; eternally also shall you be the unblessed, the cursed, the damned!' We know who it was who reaped the heritage of this Jewish transvaluation. In the context of the monstrous and inordinately fateful initiative which the Jews have exhibited in connection with this most fundamental of all declarations of war, I remember the passage which came to my pen on another occasion (*Beyond Good and Evil*, Aph. 195) — that it was, in fact, with the Jews that the revolt of the slaves begins in the sphere of morals; that revolt which has behind it a history of two millennia, and which at the present day has only moved out of our sight, because it — has achieved victory."[1]

According to Nietzsche, the morality of the "slaves," the morality of the weak, poor, and wretched, has found its most perfect development in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, the Jew, and in Him, at the same time, the "cleverest revenge of the slaves" has been embodied: "This Jesus of Nazareth, the incarnate gospel of love, this 'Redeemer' bringing salvation and victory to the poor, the sick, the sinful — was he not really temptation" (to humanity and to a defection from bestiality) "in its most sinister and irresistible form, temptation to take the tortuous path to those very *Jewish* values and those very Jewish ideals? Has not Israel really obtained the final goal of its sublime revenge, by the tortuous paths of this 'Redeemer' for all that he might pose as Israel's adver-

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, pp. 30, 31.

sary and Israel's destroyer? Is it not due to the black magic of a really *great* policy of revenge, of a far-seeing, burrowing revenge, both acting and calculating with slowness, that Israel himself must repudiate before all the world the actual instrument of his own revenge and nail it to the cross, so that all the world — that is, all the enemies of Israel — could nibble without suspicion at this very bait?" [1]

Here the "subtlety," the "ingenious narrow-mindedness" of the morally weak-minded man is so plainly discernible, that it may be grasped by everyone endowed with common sense.

And thus, according to Nietzsche, it came about that "the morality of the slaves" gained the victory in the world, that the fictitious "ascetic ideal" became the guide of civilisation, and that the "blonde brutes" grew constantly more tame and altruistic, and the superior, bestial ideals — we may also call them criminal, tyrannical, or anarchic ideals — were abandoned with unmerited contempt. According to Nietzsche, instead of God's having been born as an "animal," He was born as man: "A discerning one might easily regard himself at present as the animalisation of God." [2]

Nietzsche says further: "But why do you talk of nobler ideals? Let us submit to the facts; that the people have triumphed — or the slaves, or the populace, or the herd, or whatever name you care to give them — if this has happened through the Jews, so be it! In that case no nation ever had a greater mission in the world's history. The 'masters' have been done away with; the morality of the vulgar man has triumphed. This triumph may also be called a blood-poisoning (it has mutually fused the races) — I do not dispute it; but there is no doubt

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 32. — [2] Id. vol. XII, p. 90.

but that this intoxication has succeeded. The 'redemption' of the human race (that is, from the masters) is progressing swimmingly; everything is obviously becoming Judaised, or Christianised, or vulgarised (what is there in the words?). It seems impossible to stop the course of this poisoning through the whole body politic of mankind." [1]

And these Jews with their personified love of humanity, Jesus of Nazareth, this oppressed nation of "slaves" were destined to gain the victory, by their "unique genius for popular morals," over that glorious nation of "masters," conquerors, and robbers, namely, the Romans! Nietzsche observes: "Rome found in the Jew the incarnation of the unnatural, as though it were its diametrically opposed monstrosity, and in Rome the Jew was held to be *convicted of hatred* of the whole human race... The Romans were the strong and aristocratic; a nation stronger and more aristocratic has never existed in the world, has never even been dreamed of... The Jews, conversely, were that priestly nation of resentment *par excellence*, possessed by a unique genius for popular morals... Which of them has been provisionally victorious, Rome or Judaea? but there is not a shadow of doubt; just consider to whom in Rome itself nowadays you bow down, as though before the quintessence of all the highest values — and not only in Rome, but almost over half the world, everywhere where man has been tamed or is about to be tamed — to *three Jews*, as we know, and *one Jewess* (to Jesus of Nazareth, to Peter the fisher, to Paul the tent-maker, and to the mother of the aforesaid Jesus, named Mary). This is very remarkable: Rome is undoubtedly defeated." [2]

Although provisionally the "revolt of the slaves in the sphere of morals" [3] seems to have conquered, yet

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 33. — [2] Id. vol. XIII, pp. 54, 55. — [3] Id. vol. XIII, p. 31.

Nietzsche hopes for a new reversal of things, for an Anti-Saviour, an Anti-Christ, for a new world, in which the original condition of boundless caprice and brutally wild freedom will be re-established. Then there will no longer be a bad conscience, then the morally weak-minded man will no longer feel, with pain, the resistance of the better, moral impulses still present within him, then man will no longer torment, despise, and debase himself, but tormenting, despising, and destroying others will be his greatest pleasure and delight, and at the same time the noblest, best, and most distinguished of actions. People will cease to have a bad conscience when they trample a fellow-being under foot like a worm, nay, on the contrary, they will have a bad conscience when they treat their neighbour with consideration, gentleness, mildness, and compassion. Conscience itself must be remodelled, and therefore Nietzsche says: "Man has far too long regarded his natural proclivities with an 'evil eye,' so that eventually they have become in his system affiliated to a bad conscience. A converse endeavour would be intrinsically feasible — but who is strong enough to attempt it? — namely, to affiliate to the 'bad conscience' all those *unnatural* proclivities, all those transcendental aspirations, contrary to sense, instinct, nature, and animalism — in short, all past and present ideals, which are all ideals opposed to life, and traducing the world. To whom is one to turn nowadays with *such* hopes and pretensions? — it is just the *good* men that we should thus bring about our ears." [1]

It is true, our time does not appear quite ripe yet for this glorious condition of things. Nietzsche continues: "For such a consummation we need spirits of *different* calibre than seems really feasible in this age; spirits ren-

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 116.

dered potent through wars and victories, to whom conquest, adventure, danger, even pain, have become a need; for such a consummation we need habituation to sharp, rare air, to winter wanderings, to literal and metaphorical ice and mountains; we even need a kind of sublime malice, a supreme and most self-conscious insolence of knowledge, which is the appanage of great health; we need (to summarise the awful truth) just this *great health*" (of sublime malice and wickedness!) "Is this even feasible to-day?... But some day, in a stronger age than this rotting and introspective present, must he in sooth come to us, even the *redeemer* of great love" (of bestiality) "and scorn" (of disinterestedness and humanity), "the creative spirit, rebounding by the impetus of his own force back again away from every transcendental plane and dimension, he whose solitude is misunderstood of the people, as though it were a flight *from* reality; — while actually it is only his diving, burrowing, and penetrating *into* reality, so that when he comes again to the light he can at once bring about by these means the *redemption* of this reality; its redemption from the curse which the old ideal has laid upon it. This man of the future, who in this wise will redeem us from the old ideal, as he will from that ideal's necessary corollary of great nausea, will to nothingness, and Nihilism; this tocsin of noon and of the great verdict, which renders the will" (to power, to cruelty, to sublime malice and wickedness, to stupidity) "again free, who gives back to the world its goal and to man his hope, this Antichrist and Antinihilist, this conqueror of God and of Nothingness — *he must one day come.*"[1]

In the passage just quoted Nietzsche speaks of the "great nausea," of the "will to nothingness, and Nihil-

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, pp. 116, 117.

ism" which has resulted from the Jewish-Christian ideal of disinterested love which has hitherto obtained. Nietzsche's ideas, in this connection, are the following: When the "slaves" who had lost their freedom persuaded themselves that the outward freedom of doing what they liked was of no value, that the inner freedom from all brutal and wild desires was indeed the genuine, true freedom, they deceived themselves, for this inner freedom is a mere idea and no actual reality. Man is really free only when he can use his freedom outwardly, when there are no longer any barriers or limits to his caprice, to his "will to power," when he is really himself, when he lives and finds enjoyment only in his own "sublime malice" and wickedness, regardless of everything else; for a man's highest enjoyment of his own life, the most distinct assertion of his own self is shown when he gains full power over beings of his own kind, so that he may trample them down, cruelly torment, and kill them piecewise, by inches. The more fully a man realises how another suffers and dies by suffering, the more delight will he feel in the contrast presented by his own life, the more full of life or "healthy" will he be. Therefore Nietzsche says in the above quoted passage: "We even need a kind of sublime malice, a supreme and most self-conscious insolence of knowledge" of all that is beautiful, true and good, we need a sublime malice, "which is the appanage of great health."

The opposite of selfishness, of malice, and of stupidity, namely, disinterested love, is, according to this conception, a negation of life and means, the "great nausea," the will to nothingness, and Nihilism. For, according to Nietzsche's idea, he who loves disinterestedly, does not really live in himself, in his own person; he rather despises his own life, while delighting only in the

fact that another lives and enjoys. He who loves another with all his heart renounces his own existence. The more he loves the other, the more ready will he be to lay down his life for the person he loves. In Nietzsche's opinion, man lessens his own value when he considers another great, unless he honours in him the brute, the devilish superman. He, therefore, who loves another loathes his own life, that is, he has a "will to nothingness," to his own destruction, "to Nihilism."

Now, it would appear that Nietzsche recognises a consideration towards one's neighbours, namely for one's equals. His ideal of society seems to be an aristocracy, the members of which, it is true, behave like brutes to those outside it, but who esteem one another; yet this only seems to be so, for this combination of "blonde brutes" is maintained only as long as necessity requires. Only so long are they "*inter pares* kept so rigorously in bounds through convention, respect, custom, and gratitude, though much more through mutual vigilance and jealousy *inter pares*."[1]

As soon, however, as the pressure from outside relaxes, as soon as outward danger ceases to threaten, the brutes turn upon one another. "Herds" are formed only by the weak, by good men; the strong, "the masters," the "blonde brutes," however, only hold together by the iron force of necessity. Nietzsche declares: "By an equally natural necessity the strong strive as much for *isolation* as the weak for *union*: when the former bind themselves, it is only with a view to an aggressive joint action and joint satisfaction of their Will for Power, much against the wishes of their individual consciences; the latter, on the contrary, range themselves together with positive *delight* in such a muster — their instincts are as much gratified

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 39.

thereby as the instincts of the 'born master' (that is, the solitary beast-of-prey species of man) are disturbed and wounded to the quick by organisation. There is always lurking beneath every oligarchy — such is the universal lesson of history — the desire for tyranny. Every oligarchy is continually quivering with the tension of the effort required by each individual to keep mastering this desire."[1]

When Nietzsche speaks in terms of praise of a ruling caste, of an aristocracy that tramples the people under foot, he does not consider this aristocratic organisation as a permanent institution — for "conditions of legality can be only *exceptional conditions*"[2] —, but as a transitional state leading to that "*war of all against all*,"[3] in which every individual, for himself, gives the rein to his caprice and develops in himself the "will to power" in all its strength, that is, the most refined, the basest, grossest egoism. The solitarily roaming beast as well as the bestial criminal, "the solitary beast-of-prey species of man,"[4] who knows of no consideration and of no bounds to his caprice, are Nietzsche's ideals. When society is dissolved, when everything falls into universal ruin and becomes a general orgy, the modern antisopher exults; in high-sounding words he praises the glorious spectacle that will be presented when the society of men perishes and explodes like gigantic fireworks.

Nietzsche explains: "Finally, however, a happy state of things results, the enormous tension is relaxed; there are perhaps no more enemies among the neighbouring peoples, and the means of life, even of the enjoyment of life, are present in superabundance. With one stroke the bond

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 176, 177. — [2] Id. vol. XIII, p. 88. — [3] Stirner, *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum*, 2. Auflage, 1882, p. 265. — [4] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy. vol. XIII, p. 177.

and constraint of the old discipline severs: it is no longer regarded as necessary, as a condition of existence — if it would continue, it can only do so as a form of *luxury*, as an archaïsing *taste*. Variations, whether they be deviations (into the higher, finer, and rarer), or deteriorations and monstrosities, appear suddenly on the scene in the greatest exuberance and splendour; the individual dares to be individual und detach himself. At this turning-point of history there manifest themselves, side by side, and often mixed and entangled together, a magnificent, manifold, virgin-forest-like upgrowth and up-striving, a kind of *tropical tempo* in the rivalry of growth, and an extraordinary decay and self-destruction, owing to the savagely opposing and seemingly exploding egoisms, which strive with one another 'for sun and light,' and can no longer assign any limit, restraint, or forbearance for themselves by means of the hitherto existing morality. It was this morality itself which piled up the strength so enormously, which bent the bow in so threatening a manner: — it is now 'out of date,' it is getting 'out of date.' The dangerous and disquieting point has been reached when the greater, more manifold, more comprehensive life *is lived beyond* the old morality; the 'individual' stands out, and is obliged to have recourse to his own law-giving, his own arts and artifices for self-preservation, self-elevation, and self-deliverance. Nothing but new 'Whys,' nothing but new 'Hows,' no common formulas any longer, misunderstanding and disregard in league with each other, decay, deterioration, and the loftiest desires frightfully entangled, the genius of the race overflowing from all the cornucopias of good and bad, a portentous simultaneousness of Spring and Autumn, full of new charms and mysteries peculiar to the fresh, still inexhausted, still unwearied corruption. Danger is again present, the mother of morality, great

danger; this time shifted into the individual, into the neighbour and friend, into the street, into their own child, into their own heart, into all the most personal and secret recesses of their desires and volitions. What will the moral philosophers who appear at this time have to preach? They discover, these sharp onlookers and loafers, that the end is quickly approaching, that everything around them decays and produces decay, that nothing will endure until the day after to-morrow, except one species of man, the incurably *mediocre*. The mediocre alone have a prospect of continuing and propagating themselves — they will be the men of the future, the sole survivors; 'be like them! become mediocre!' is now the only morality which has still a significance, which still obtains a hearing. — But it is difficult to preach this morality of mediocrity! it can never avow what it is and what it desires! it has to talk of moderation and dignity and duty and brotherly love — it will have difficulty *in concealing its irony!*"[1]

It is true there is method in this madness of Nietzsche's, an admirable consistency in the negation of all truth. As we have seen, not only is moral truth denied by him, but also scientific and æsthetic truth. For if a knowledge and observance of moral truth requires disinterestedness, detachment from the narrowness of one's own person, an abstraction from oneself, an entering into the thoughts, feelings, and efforts of others, into their hearts and minds, a conception of scientific truth no less requires disinterestedness. In order to be objective, to ascertain any fact with scientific fidelity and exactitude, the mind must possess the same inner repose and freedom from bias as in the case of a moral action. Vain and selfish men, those who think only of their personal advantage, will always be bad testifiers to scientific truth. Of what concern can

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XII, pp. 235-7.

scientific truth be to him who raises selfishness to a principle of life, who finds the truth of life in the narrowness of his individuality? Selfishness is opposed to every kind of truth.

According to Nietzsche only the disinterested, the weak, cowardly "slaves", "those who are tired and used up," who have not the "will to stupidity,"[1] "a supreme and most self-conscious insolence of knowledge,"[2] cling anxiously to scientific truth, to an objective estimate of all that happens; but the stately, noble "men of prey,"[3] the "masters" merely look down with contempt on those good-natured simpletons who seriously occupy themselves with scientific truth. The latter, according to Nietzsche, is directly hostile to life, because it leads man out of his brutal narrowness, out of the isolation of the individual, to a knowledge of the great connection among all things. In the complete isolation of the individual Nietzsche sees the ideal condition of human existence. Whatever takes the individual man out of his own narrow personality, whatever leads him to the knowledge that he is only an infinitesimal portion of an immense, immeasurably great whole, is rejected by our antisopher as injurious, because it leads man to self-limitation, to a disinterested devotion of the heart, to a knowledge of the "ascetic ideal." As soon as men grow sensible, and recognise their position in the universe, they will be ready to abandon the boundless assertion of their paltry personality and curb their bestiality. By this, according to Nietzsche, they renounce true life; and so away with all scientific truth!

Let us hear Nietzsches antisophic remarks: "No! You can't get round me with science, when I search for the

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XII, p. 91. — [2] Id. vol. XIII, p. 117. — [3] Id. vol. XII, p. 224.

natural antagonists of the ascetic ideal, when I put the question: '*Where* is the opposed will in which the *opponent ideal*" (of the utmost selfishness, of brutal narrowness in acts, thoughts, and sensations) "expresses itself?' Science is not, by a long way, independent enough to fulfil this function; in every department science needs an ideal value, a power which creates values, and in whose *service* it *can believe* in itself — science itself never creates values. Its relation to the ascetic ideal is not in itself antagonistic; speaking roughly, it rather represents the progressive force in the inner evolution of that ideal. Tested more exactly, its opposition and antagonism are concerned not with the ideal itself, but only with that ideal's outworks, its outer garb, its masquerade, with its temporary hardening, stiffening, and dogmatising — it makes the life in the ideal free once more, while it repudiates its superficial elements. These two phenomena, science and the ascetic ideal, both rest on the same basis — I have already made this clear — the basis, I say, of the same over-appreciation of truth (more accurately the same belief in the *impossibility* of valuing and of criticising truth), and consequently they are *necessarily* allies, so that, in the event of their being attacked, they must always be attacked and called into question together. A valuation of the ascetic ideal inevitably entails a valuation of science as well; lose no time in seeing this clearly, and be sharp to catch it! *Art*, I am speaking provisionally, for I will treat it on some other occasion in greater detail, — art, I repeat, in which lying is sanctified and the *will for deception* has good conscience on its side, is much more fundamentally opposed to the ascetic ideal than is science.

"No! this 'modern science' — mark you this well — is at times the *best* ally for the ascetic ideal, and for the

very reason that it is the ally which is most unconscious, most automatic, most secret, and most subterranean! They have been playing into each other's hands up to the present, have these 'poor in spirit' and the scientific opponents of that ideal (take care, by the bye, not to think that these opponents are the antithesis of this ideal, that they are the *rich* in spirit — that they are *not*; I have called them the *hectic* in spirit). As for these celebrated *victories* of science; there is no doubt that they are victories — but victories over what? There was not for a single minute any victory among their list over the ascetic ideal, rather was it made stronger, that is to say, more elusive, more abstract, more insidious, from the fact that a wall, an outwork, that had got built on to the main fortress and disfigured its appearance, should from time to time be ruthlessly destroyed and broken down by science. Does any one seriously suggest that the downfall of the theological astronomy signified the downfall of that ideal? — Has, perchance, man grown *less in need* of a transcendental solution of his riddle of existence, because since that time this existence has become more random, casual, and superfluous in the *visible* order of the universe? Has there not been since the time of Copernicus an unbroken progress in the self-belittling of man and his *will* for belittling himself? Alas, his belief in his dignity, his uniqueness, his irreplaceableness in the scheme of existence, is gone — he has become animal, literal, unqualified, and unmitigated animal, he who in his earlier belief was almost God ('child of God,' 'demi God.') Since Copernicus man seems to have fallen on to a steep plane — he rolls faster and faster away from the centre — whither? into nothingness? *into the 'thrilling sensation of his own nothingness?'* — Well! this would be the straight way — to the *old* ideal? — All science (and by no means only astronomy, with regard

to the humiliating and deteriorating effect of which Kant has made a remarkable confession, 'it annihilates my own importance'), all science, natural as much as *unnatural* — by unnatural I mean the self-critique of reason — nowadays sets out to talk man out of his present opinion of himself, as though that opinion had been nothing but a bizarre piece of conceit." [1]

Nietzsche's repugnance to the disinterested devotion of the heart, the "ascetic ideal," as it also finds expression in man's striving after truth, in the "will to truth," is so great that he blindly rejects everything that even remotely recalls a disinterested endeavour. Even the "free, very free spirits," who, like Nietzsche, deny everything, God, Christianity, and morality, even they are not free enough for him, for in their doubting and denying, the "will to truth" still finds expression. They deny God, Christianity, and morality, because these ideas have no place in their view of life, because they consider them untrue; they acknowledge only what can stand the test of scientific truth. So there is in them still a striving after truth, still a kind of disinterested devotion of the heart to a thought, a subordinating of themselves to a firm conviction such as is thoroughly repugnant to the morally weak-minded man who will only acknowledge the "instinct of freedom," the "will to power" of his ego, morbidly divided as it is in its impulses. Scientific truth, too, carries with it a mental self-limitation of the personality, "asceticism." Therefore the "will to truth" is opposed to what Nietzsche calls the "will to power," the "instinct of freedom," that is, the unfettered and boundless assertion of one's own personality. For the criminal, the robber, or the murderer there is no fixed truth by which he can be in any way restrained. Hence Nietzsche's aphorism: "A sign of

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, pp. 198-201.

strong character, when once the resolution has been taken to shut the ear even to the best counter-arguments. Occasionally, therefore, a will to stupidity."[1] Thus the "will to stupidity" of the "masters" is opposed to the "will to truth" of the "slaves." In the motto of the oriental Order of Assassins, "Nothing is true, everything is allowed," Nietzsche sees the most perfect expression of what he calls "freedom of thought."[2]

The honest "atheists, anti-Christians, immoralists, Nihilists," who are really convinced of the truth of their ideas, and who have, therefore, a firm conviction which they uphold under all circumstances, because they still believe in the value of truth, do not excite Nietzsche's sympathy at all. He who has a firm conviction which he upholds under all circumstances is not "free." His „instinct of freedom" still leaves much to be desired, his "will to stupidity" and his "will to power" are confined by his "will to truth." The Devil, the Father of Lies, is great and Friedrich Nietzsche is his prophet, such is now the creed of all "free spirits." But let us hear the modern antisopher Nietzsche, the denier of all truth, in detail on this matter:

"All these pale atheists, anti-Christians, immoralists, Nihilists; these sceptics, 'ephectics,' and 'hectics' of the intellect (in a certain sense they are the latter, both collectively and individually); these supreme idealists of knowledge, in whom alone nowadays the intellectual conscience dwells and is alive — in point of fact they believe themselves as far away as possible from the ascetic ideal, do these 'free, very free spirits:' and yet, if I may reveal what they themselves cannot see — for they stand too near themselves: this ideal is simply *their* ideal, they represent it nowadays

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XII, p. 91. — [2] Id. vol. XIII, p. 195.

and perhaps no one else, they themselves are its most spiritualised product, its most advanced picket of skirmishers and scouts, its most insidious delicate and elusive form of seduction. — If I am in any way a reader of riddles, then I will be one with this sentence: they are very far from being *free spirits; for they still believe in truth.* When the Christian Crusaders in the East came into collision with that invincible order of assassins, that order of free spirits *par excellence,* whose lowest grade lived in a state of discipline such as no order of monks has ever attained, then in some way or other they managed to get an inkling of that symbol and tally-word, that was reserved for the highest grade alone as their *secretum,* 'Nothing is true, everything is allowed,' — in sooth, *that* was *freedom* of thought, that was *taking leave* of the very belief in truth. Has indeed any European, any Christian freethinker, ever yet wandered into this proposition and its labyrinthine *consequences?* Does he know *from experience* the Minotauros of this den. — I doubt it — nay, I know otherwise. Nothing is more really alien to these 'mono-fanatics,' these *so-called* 'free spirits,' than freedom and unfettering in that sense; in no respect are they more closely tied, the absolute fanaticism of their belief in truth is unparalleled. I know all this perhaps too much from experience at close quarters — that dignified philosophic abstinence to which a belief like that binds its adherents, that stoicism of the intellect, which eventually vetoes negation as rigidly as it does affirmation, that *wish* for standing still in front of the actual, the *factum brutum,* that fatalism in *'petits faits'* (*ce petit faitalism,* as I call it), in which French Science now attempts a kind of moral superiority over German, this renunciation of interpretation generally (that is, of forcing, doctoring, abridging, omitting, suppressing, inventing, falsifying, and all the other *essential*

attributes of interpretation) — all this, considered broadly, expresses the asceticism of virtue, quite as efficiently as does any repudiation of the senses (it is at bottom only a *modus* of that repudiation). But what forces it into that unqualified will for truth is the faith *in the ascetic ideal itself*, even though it take the form of its unconscious imperatives, — make no mistake about it, it is the faith, I repeat, in a *metaphysical* value, an *intrinsic* value of truth, of a character which is only warranted and guaranteed in this ideal (it stands and falls with that ideal) . . . The man who is truthful in that daring and extreme fashion, which is the presupposition of the faith in science, *asserts thereby a different world* from that of life, nature, and history; and in so far as he asserts the existence of that different world, come, must he not similarly repudiate its counterpart, this world, *our* world? The belief on which our faith in science is based has remained to this day a metaphysical belief — even we knowers of to-day, we godless foes of metaphysics, we too take our fire from that conflagration which was kindled by a thousand-year-old faith, from that Christian belief, which was also Plato's belief, the belief that God is truth, that truth is *divine*. But what if this belief becomes more and more incredible, what if nothing proves itself to be divine, unless it be error, blindness, lies — what if God Himself proved Himself to be our *oldest lie?*"[1]

Let it be stated once more, Nietzsche rejects the will to truth itself, in whatever form it may present itself, as this will to truth is opposed to the "will to power," that is, to brutal selfishness. Even the atheist, when he is such from real conviction, from a love of truth, possesses no claim yet to be called a free spirit in Nietzsche's sense of the phrase. Compare his statements:

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, pp. 194-7.

"Everywhere otherwise, where the mind is at work seriously, powerfully, and without counterfeiting, it dispenses altogether now with an ideal (the popular expression for this abstinence is 'Atheism') — *with the exception of the will for truth.* But this will, this *remnant* of an ideal, is, if you will believe me, that ideal itself in its severest and cleverest formulation, esoteric through and through, stripped of all outworks, and consequently not so much its remnant as its *kernel.* Unqualified honest atheism (and its air only do we breathe, we, the most intellectual men of this age) is *not* opposed to that ideal, to the extent that it appears to be; it is rather one of the final phases of its evolution, one of its syllogisms and pieces of inherent logic — it is the awe-inspiring *catastrophe* of a two-thousand-year training in truth, which finally forbids itself *the lie of the belief in God.*" [1]

Nietzsche is consistent in his antisophy, he is not one of the half-hearted kind, he completely does away with whatever might in any way impede the authority of personal caprice carried to its utmost limits, he pursues the "ascetic ideal" into its last hiding-place. Whatever may take the morally weak-minded man out of his inner isolation, all disinterested devotion of the heart to an act, a thought, or an impression, that is to say, all creative activity, scientific, objective thought, and purely æsthetic sensation, are repugnant to him in his innermost soul. We have become acquainted with his rejection of the "ascetic ideal" in morality and science and recollect his contempt for the "ascetic ideal" in art, for the disinterested devotion of the heart to an impression. Naturally Kant's definition of the beautiful cannot please him. Kant said, beautiful is that which pleases generally and without interest. Without interest! That is the point; it

[1] *The Complete Works,* ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 207.

is this that the extremely egotistical individuality cannot bear. The selfish man can as little receive an impression through his senses or through his imagination without personal interest, as he can act or think without personal interest. If, therefore, the narrow, self-limited individuality is to admit an impression, this impression must in some way be connected with the personal interests of the individual, it must point to certain personal advantages, it must contain "a promise of happiness," "*une promesse de bonheur.*"[1] Therefore Nietzsche asserts the personally limited standpoint, not only in act and thought, but also in sensation. It is the way of the base and vulgar to consider nothing of importance which has not, somehow, a special reference to their own person. But Nietzsche, who teaches the "Transvaluation of All Values,"[2] and turns everything upside down, sees precisely in what is usually called base and vulgar, the truly "aristocratic" and noble. The device of the "Order of free spirits *par excellence*," "Nothing" (that in any way runs counter to one's personal interests) "is true, all" (that serves selfishness) "is allowed," is, therefore, to be supplemented as regards æsthetics as follows: "Nothing" (that does not promise a satisfaction of selfishness) "is beautiful." An enthusiastic adherent of Nietzsche's once stated that he intended to produce a system of ethics in which the idea of morality should no longer find a place. It is to be hoped that, when he completes his work, he will next attempt the task of producing a system of science in which the idea of truth, and another of æsthetics in which the idea of the beautiful find no place. What glorious prospects for the development of humanity into devilish superhumanity! Long life to selfishness, long life to the "will to stupidity!"

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 131. — [2] Id. vol. XIII, p. 207.

Down with the "ascetic ideal" in act, thought, and sensation, away with the hideous trinity, Goodness, Truth, and Beauty! Open the prisons and the lunatic asylums! Let the men "of strong character" with "will to stupidity" [1] rule and fix "all values," also the value of the beautiful, then only shall we come to know true morality, true science, and true art.

According to Nietzsche, "the devil is the oldest friend of knowledge," [2] that is, knowledge of the sublimity of bestiality, of the glory of the narrowest selfishness. To the very first human beings he said, "Ye shall be as gods," autocratic personalities, isolated individuals, "knowing," that is fixing autocratically, what is "good and evil" for you; that is, your selfishness, your most personal interest alone will form the standard for the value of all things. Good is, says the "master," the "aristocrat," what serves my "instinct of freedom," my "will to power," my utmost selfishness, but evil or bad is what is opposed to my absolute caprice. Therefore Nietzsche asserts: "'The masters' right of giving names goes so far that it is permissible to look upon language itself as the expression of the power of the masters: they say 'this *is* that, and that,' they seal finally every object and every event with a sound, and thereby at the same time take possession of it. It is because of this origin that the word 'good' is far from having any necessary connection with altruistic acts, in accordance with the superstitious belief of these moral philosophers. On the contrary, it is on the occasion of the *decay* of aristocratic values, that the antithesis between 'egoistic' and 'altruistic' presses more and more heavily on the human conscience — it is, to use my own language, the *herd instinct* which finds in this antithesis an expression in many ways. And even then

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XII, p. 91. — [2] Id. vol. XII, p. 94.

it takes a considerable time for this instinct to become sufficiently dominant, for the valuation to be inextricably dependent on this antithesis (as is the case in contemporary Europe); for to-day that prejudice is predominant, which, acting even now with all the intensity of an obsession and brain disease, holds that 'moral,' 'altruistic,' and '*désintéressé*' are concepts of equal value." [1]

But is not the selfish man in the midst of the discord of good and evil, instead of "beyond good and evil?" The selfish man who views everything merely from his personally limited standpoint, who refers everything merely to himself, will be most easily hurt, since he applies everything to himself. He will, therefore, in countless cases, suffer "evil," where the disinterested man will preserve complete tranquillity of mind, that is, will rise superior to the contrast between good and evil. Indeed, the more disinterested a man is, the more will he be superior to fate, the less liable will he be to be attracted to, or deterred from, things, the more will he really find himself beyond good and evil, in a condition of freedom. The more selfish, on the contrary, a man is, the more dependent will he be on fate, on the different values of things, the more unfree will he be in his movements, the more will he be involved in the discord between good and evil, the more will he "know," that is feel in his own person what is good and what is evil. Nietzsche's "Beyond Good and Evil" [2] in part has reference to the *moral* conceptions which to the brute in man, to the criminal, appear merely as a restraint affecting him from the outside, and which he seeks to shake off. The criminal, the man of "strong character," is beyond good and evil, since with greed and

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, pp. 20, 21. — [2] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XII (*Beyond Good and Evil.* Translated by H. Zimmern, 1911.)

passion, and without a semblance of human feeling, he does, or seizes upon, that which seems good to himself, and with the same unfreedom of the brute beast, he attempts to fend off that which he considers evil to his own person.

But why discuss further what is perfectly self-evident and what is only not understood by antisophers, who have the "will to stupidity." Only the explanation of these facts is of interest, and we shall not be wrong in assuming that the real, incorrigible criminal is not, as Stirner and Nietzsche assume, the strong and healthy man, but rather an imperfectly developed or diseased man. In him the sympathetic, social feelings are either more weakly developed from the outset, or have been disturbed in the course of his life by brain disease; and in proportion as the sympathetic, social, altruistic impulses recede into the background, understanding also for the moral motives of others becomes lost.

Of the antisophical poets it is Henrik Ibsen who has acquired great celebrity. He himself, in a letter to George Brandes, has given expression to the fact that at bottom, like Stirner and Nietzsche, he advocates moral, intellectual, and artistic narrowness. Like Stirner and Nietzsche he is a despiser of all laws on which the existence of the state, human society, science, and art are based. Ibsen says in this letter: "The State is the curse of the" (egotistic) "individual. Let the idea of State be undermined, let voluntary choice and intellectual kinship be set up as the sole determinatives of a union, and we shall have the beginning of a freedom that will be of some use. A changing of the form of government is merely a retail-business on a small scale. Perhaps a little more or a little less so, but take it all in all a wretched concern. The State is rooted in time, in time it will culminate. Things greater than it will fall; all religion will fall. Neither the

conceptions of morality nor the forms of art have an eternity before them. How much are we, at bottom, bound to uphold? Who will guarantee to me that on Jupiter twice two will not be five?"[1]

So here, too, we see a revolt against all those natural barriers, founded in the nature of man, which limit his caprices and whims. Neither the laws of humanity, nor the forms of art, nor the multiplication table and the rules of thought are to be in any way binding to the selfish man. The egotist calls everything in question, but not for the purpose of arriving at unquestionable certainty, at truth; he denies all laws merely to be able, unhampered by any general rule of custom, common sense, or art, to assert, to practise, or conceive of, the maddest things, whenever it happens to suit his selfish caprice to do so. A well-ordered life of men in society, in the community, in the council, or in the state, in which each one must adapt himself to his neighbour and cannot give free rein to his every mad caprice, is as utterly repugnant to the anarchistic poet Ibsen as it is to the anarchistic antisophers Stirner and Nietzsche. Ibsen simply cannot understand how a man can condescend voluntarily to impose restraints on his own absolute caprice by complying with the regulations of a society of men and by criticising his own actions in the light of these regulations. As George Brandes tells us, Ibsen takes an ever renewed pleasure in reading in a newspaper the words, "and then a commission was appointed," or "then a society was founded." Brandes adds: "I think that Ibsen, in his innermost mind carries individualism to extremes of which his works alone cannot convey an impression." Yet the interpretations of Ibsen's Epilogue "When We Dead Awaken," of "Brand," of "John Gabriel Borkman," and of "Ghosts"

[1] *Henrik Ibsen's Sämtliche Werke*, vol. X, pp. 159, 160.

which follow, will give us an idea of these extreme convictions.

So Ibsen is not, as he has been called, an idealist, but an individualist. He rejects the value of all ideas and ideals, whether moral, scientific, or artistic; he recognises solely and simply the value of the individual, of the single person. A life in ideas or ideals is no life, according to Ibsen. Truly alive is only the individual with his entirely individual actions, thoughts, and sensations. An idea or an ideal is a thing impersonal, to which the individual subjects himself, even when his own particular sensations, thoughts, or wishes struggle against it. Therefore ideal and life are opposed to each other, that is, the ideal is directly hostile to life, just as, on the contrary, life, true, individual, personal life, leads to the abolition of all ideals. If individual life alone is justified and is consequently truth, then every ideal, being hostile to life, is unjustified, and consequently a lie. Therefore Ibsen, in his drama, "The Wild Duck," makes the physician Relling say that instead of the word *ideals* it would be better to use the plain expression *lies*.

If in the main Ibsen's individualism corresponds to that of Stirner and Nietzsche, yet it does not entirely coincide with it, but diverges from it in an essential point, namely, in the fact that Ibsen adds to the individual wants of a human being, completion in the person of a being of the opposite sex adapted to his or her individuality. Whilst to the arbitrariness and caprice of Stirner's egoist and Nietzsche's devilish superman no limits whatever are set, Ibsen's man of individual feelings is most intimately connected with the woman fitted to his individuality, and *vice versa*. The greatest crime, nay, the one "unpardonable sin,"[1] in Ibsen's sense, which a man can commit

[1] Ibsen, *John Gabriel Borkman*. Translated by W. Archer, 1897, p. 110.

against himself and against the woman belonging to him is, for the sake of some ideal, be it an artistic, a scientific, a social, or a religious one, to reject the woman who forms the complement of his individuality, or to sacrifice to such an ideal the wife and child he already has. Ibsen's individualism, too, is directed against all ideals, but it finds a limitation in the relations to wife and child, relations in which, after all, a foundation may be found for the further development of humane feelings. This train of thought will be followed out in detail in the explanation of the dramas cited.

In his Epilogue, "When We Dead Awaken," Ibsen draws the final conclusion, and declares all life in ideas, also in the province of art, to be not life but death. The artist striving after the ideal renounces the warm, pulsating, true and individual life, and is therefore in reality one of the "dead." Rubek the sculptor, too, is under the sway of such an ideal and thus loses his true life. He desires to give bodily shape to an entirely abstract Christian dogmatic conception, to the resurrection. For this purpose he takes as a model a young woman who loves him inexpressibly and whom he succeeds in imbuing with his ideal to such an extent that she feels herself entirely identified with his creation and calls the work of art he produces her own child.

Here we have to deal with the transference of the entire mental attitude of one person to another, to such an extent that the deeper nature of the other is forced back and suppressed. The deeper nature of Irene consisted in her true womanly impulse towards life and love. It was not the artist, but the man, whom she loved with unquenchable passion. But so greatly had the "poet," who utilises his art to turn reality into illusion, so greatly had the artist, who causes glowing life to pale into an idea, to take the rigid shape

of a stone image, transformed Irene's deepest nature, that she would have killed him if, when she stood to him in all her naked beauty, instead of merely contemplating her as an artist, he had looked upon, or touched, her with a man's sensuous desire.

Rubek was possessed by the superstition that he would not produce an ideal work of art, if he clasped in his arms the woman whose naked beauty artistically inspired him. So he left untouched the being whom alone he loved, whose possession was the goal of all the strong desire of his senses. He renounced his real, his true, and warm life, and turned it into a cold marble ghostly image. Feature by feature he could reproduce in the statue this woman glowing with life and love. Now he had produced the bodily shape of her whom he loved in cold wet clay and then in marble. Now he possessed a cold, lifeless stone, his petrified ideal, but his true life, the woman towards whom all his hot blood pulsed, was lost to him. So completely had he entered into the idea that for him Irene should be only an ideal model for his work of art that he thought he had done with her when the work of art was essentially completed. The life they had lived together so far, he therefore looked upon merely as an *episode*, and involuntarily this word came to his lips when he thanked Irene for her devoted assistance.

The word *episode* showed Irene how completely Rubek was monopolised by his artistic ideas and ideals, how little she was to him as a *woman*, as a living reality, in comparison with these ideas and ideals, and this it was that drove her from him. Indignantly she tore herself away and plunged deep into the whirlpool of sensuous pleasures. In variety theatres she exposed her nakedness not to the eyes of artists, but to the eager eyes of voluptuaries. If, as a *woman*, she had been un-

able to make any impression on the man she loved, she would now turn the heads of innumerable men, even to madness, to suicide. That was sweet revenge, and often she would have liked to laugh to herself at the comical contrast in her life that now she could exert her womanly power so strongly and over so many, whereas formerly she could not rouse the one ideal dreamer and poet out of his equanimity. But laughter died within her, because her inmost being was destroyed. All her sensuous enjoyments could not deceive her as to the emptiness in her heart, for her life was bound up with that of the one man, whom she could leave, it is true, but whom she could not forget. Just as she had maddened others, because, attracted by only one man, she had spurned them all, so she herself falls a prey to insanity from which she is but slowly recovering when Rubek again meets her.

He, too, no longer finds satisfaction in his life and occupations. With Irene not only the Muse, his inspiration, abandoned him, but also the woman who had been infinitely dearer to him than he would confess even to himself. At first he thought, indeed, that he could easily find a substitute. He gained possession of a stately house in town and a villa on the Taunitz Lake, and besides won for a wife the lively and cheerful little Maya who, however, had not the least natural turn for the ideal in art. Only too soon did he recognise his mistake, and now he was condemned to pass long, desolate years by the side of a woman incapable of sharing his enthusiasm for the ideal or of being to him a beloved wife. Irene alone had the key to the tiny casket in his breast in which slumbered all his artistic dreams; Irene, too, was the only woman whom he, as a man, desired to possess, who was the complement of his true life. And hence it is so natural that, on meeting, Irene and Rubek immediately talk to each other as

if all that had passed since their separation were of no significance. In thought, both had stretched out their arms to each other across time and space to embrace each in the person of the other his own true warm life; for love melts into one; where the beloved one is not, there is no life.

But Rubek tries in vain once more to rouse in her an enthusiasm for his artistic ideals; she no longer possesses the key to the tiny casket filled with ideal dreams and will not possess it: she hates the artist, the "poet," who had poetised her real life away, yet she exults and declares herself freed from the nightmare of insanity, when Rubek speaks of his *repentance*, of his repentance at having despised and spurned the real bloom of life for the sake of an ideal illusion. She was "dead" when her part was merely that of a Muse of Art, "dead" when with an empty heart she gave herself to men she did not love; but with exultation she welcomes life in this glorious world, now that her beloved offers himself for the first time as a *man*, now that "the dead awaken," awaken to real life and to the happiness of love. And, in Ibsen's opinion, Rubek too was dead, confined in a cavern together with cold wet clay and cold hard marble, killing in his heart "the happiness of life — of love" by spectral, empty ideas. Ibsen makes him say:

> "Yes, is not life in sunshine and in beauty a hundred times better worth while than to hang about to the end of your days in a raw, damp hole, and wear yourself out in a perpetual struggle with lumps of clay and blocks of stone?"[1]

Rubek was dead, when in Irene, the woman glowing with love, he saw only an idea, an artistic ideal. He was

[1] *When We Dead Awaken.* Translated by W. Archer, 1900, pp. 86, 87.

dead when he spent his time by the side of a being, Maya, for whom he felt no love. He wants to awake to life and not merely to play and play, as they used to do during the beautiful evenings by the Taunitz Lake, but he wants to live really for once, though it be but for once, in the rapture and ecstasy of love, with his own being's other half. But here also the fatal influence of an ideal point of view makes itself felt, here also both rise too high in the intoxication of their rapture, for, instead of building up a secure happiness in the valley, they climb upwards in spite of threatening mountain mist and snow-storm, to be crushed by the avalanche and hurled into the abyss.

"Professor Rubek.

[throwing his arms violently around her] Then let two of the dead — us two — for once live life to its uttermost — before we go down to our graves again!

Irene.

[with a shriek] Arnold!

Professor Rubek.

But not here in the half darkness! Not here with this hideous dank shroud flapping around us —

Irene.

[carried away by passion] No, no — up in the light, and in all the glittering glory! Up to the Peak of Promise!

Professor Rubek.

There we will hold our marriage-feast. Irene — oh, my beloved!

Irene.

[proudly] The sun may freely look on us, Arnold.

Professor Rubek.

All the powers of light may freely look on us — and all the powers of darkness too. *[Seizes her hand]* Will you then follow me, oh my grace-given bride?

Irene.

[as though transfigured] I follow you, freely and gladly, my lord and master!

Professor Rubek.

[drawing her along with him] We must first pass through the mists, Irene, and then —

Irene.

Yes, through all the mists, and then right up to the summit of the tower that shines in the sunrise.

[The mist-clouds close in over the scene — Professor Rubek and Irene, hand in hand, climb up over the snow-field to the right and soon disappear among the lower clouds. Keen storm-gusts hurtle and whistle through the air .... Suddenly a sound like thunder is heard from high up on the snow-field, which glides and whirls downwards with rushing speed. Professor Rubek and Irene can be dimly discerned as they are whirled along with the masses of snow and buried in them.]"[1]

In contrast to these two people wavering between a true impulse of life and idealism, we find the other couple, Ulfheim and Maya, far removed from all ideal endeavour, solely and simply bent upon enjoying to the full the true and real life, on draining the cup of existence to the dregs. In this desire for life and love they soon find, and hold to, each other.

[1] *When We Dead Awaken.* Translated by W. Archer, 1900, pp. 158-60.

With the most subtle intention the two women closely connected with the idealistic dreamer Rubek are called Maya and Irene, in conformity with their opposite characters. Maya means the fertile, the motherly, the productive woman, but also, according to the Hindoo idealistic conception, the varied, deceptive material world enticing to restless desire and consuming passion, to conflict and discord, to the idealist mere empty delusion, but to the individualist ultimate reality and truth. It is the *veil of Maya* which, according to the idealistic conception, hides from men the truth that the too ardent pursuit of earthly happiness is but an error, that all the good things of this world are incapable of appeasing the heart's deepest desire which really aims at an infinite good.

Irene, on the other hand, the Greek word, means peace, compromise, harmony, the association of a plurality of individuals into the ideal bond of a higher unity, the essence of the ideal itself. The individual, ruled by the ideal of a higher life and full of longing to be absorbed in it, is inclined to renounce his individual contrasts and peculiarities and, instead of preserving his peculiarity in a struggle with neighbouring individuals, would rather peacefully combine with them to produce a higher whole. But in peace the individualist sees death, and in the renunciation of his individual peculiarities, appetites, and inclinations the destruction of his individual existence. In his participation in the higher whole the individualist does not see the greatest advantage to, but the loss of, his real life. Peace is possible only under lawful conditions, where each single person adapts himself to others according to these laws. But this friendly adaptation in favour of a higher, ideal whole is death to the individualist. Accordingly Ibsen writes to George Brandes, "The State is the curse of the individual," the State with its legal, peaceful order. "We

egoists," says Stirner, "can feel at ease only when we — *destroy*," [1] but not when we combine and produce. But with the dissolution of all the laws that create a union, the higher, ideal unity will fall asunder into its single parts, the individuals; the ideal bond will be severed, peace among the individuals will be destroyed, and thus each individual will be thrown back upon himself. Irene means peace, and, in Ibsen's opinion, peace suggests the stillness of the grave. Life is found only in conflict, in the "war of all against all." [2] Therefore Irene, the ideal peace that brings death, is the name given to the woman who serves the idealistic dreamer, "artist," and "poet," as Muse.

Maya, on the contrary, the representative of the individualistic world of the senses, which entices to desire, conflict, and discord, allies herself with Ulfheim, the bear-hunter, the enemy to all idealistic illusion, who can only conceive of life as a continual chase, a ceaseless conflict, the wilder the better. He never feels more alive than when he can use his knife, when he can assert his individual existence in opposing and destroying a dangerous antagonist. [3] "There's not a bit of the artist about him." [4] For, in Ibsen's opinion, to be an artist is equivalent to seeking a dead peace in the ideal, to transforming the real, individual life into an ideal, æsthetic illusion. But to be a man is to be a fighter, continually to assert one's individual existence in conflict with bears or with men. Indeed the poet, too, the artist in general, has to master the object before him. Professor Rubek "struggles with his marble blocks," and Ulfheim "struggles with tense and quivering bear-sinews." "And we both of us win the fight in the end — subdue and master our material," [5] says the bear-killer.

[1] *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum*, 2. Auflage, 1882, p. 147. — [2] Id. p. 265. — [3] *When We Dead Awaken*, p. 34. — [4] Id. pp. 71, 72. — [5] Id. p. 35.

But the mastering of the lifeless material of marble blocks remains after all a poor substitute for the mastering of *living* material. According to the individualistic or anarchistic view, a true consciousness of one's own life can only be acquired by the suppression and destruction of another life. And the fuller, the stronger, the more self-conscious the life of the other individual is, the sweeter will it be to trample it underfoot. Therefore Nietzsche calls *cruelty* the fundamental instinct and the primal impulse of the "masters," their "great joy and delight."[1] But lifeless marble cannot *feel* how it is "mastered."

Significant also are the words of the tempter, which are put into the mouth of *Rubek*, the *idealist*. Satan had led Jesus to a very high mountain, had shown Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and had promised them to Him as His reward, if He would kneel down and worship him. But in Ibsen's Epilogue the idealist Rubek plays the part of the tempter, and it is *he* who uses the words of Satan. According to the individualistic "Transvaluation of All Values,"[2] the relation between the symbolic meaning of God and Devil is reversed. According to the idealistic conception, it is Satan who leads one away from the true, ideal life in God and from peace of mind to the violent, ceaseless conflict of the passions in the alluring, seductive material world, to the death of the soul. According to the individualistic view, on the contrary, life in the ideal is no life, but death. Satan, who turns man away from God, from the empty, life-destroying ideal, is therefore man's real benefactor and real friend. Therefore Nietzsche calls "God our *oldest lie*,"[3] and contrariwise the father of lies, Satan, the "oldest friend of knowledge,"[4] that is, of the knowledge of the true value

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 73. — [2] Id. p. 207. — [3] Id. vol. XIII, p. 197. — [4] Id. vol. XII, p. 94.

of individual life. Thus it is the idealistic dreamer Rubek who is the real tempter, the real liar. Satan spoke the truth, in Ibsen's opinion: the kingdoms of the world and their glory are real life to the individual, but by his idealistic dreams Rubek only allures to high and desert plains of ice and snow where all life grows torpid and perishes. Compare the following passages:

"Maya.

But do you remember what you promised me the day we came to an understanding on — on that difficult subject . . . You said you would take me up to a high mountain and show me all the glory of the world . . . And all that glory should be mine, you said." [1]

Again:

"Irene.

I fell down at your feet and served, you, Arnold!" [2]

Again:

"Professor Rubek.

Did I not promise to take you up with me to a high mountain and show you all the glory of the world?" [3]

Again:

"Irene.

[smiles as though lost in recollection] I once saw a marvellously lovely sunrise.

Professor Rubek.

Did you? Where was that?

Irene.

High, high up on a dizzy mountain-top. You beguiled me up there by promising that I should see all the glory of the world if only I —

[1] *When We Dead Awaken*, pp. 16, 17. — [2] Id. p. 53. — [3] Id. p. 87.

Professor Rubek.

If only you —? Well?

Irene.

I did as you told me — went with you up to the heights. And there I fell upon my knees, and worshipped you, and served you. *[Is silent for a moment; then says softly]* Then I saw the sunrise."[1]

Ibsen's significance for our time is much greater than is commonly assumed. Conflict is the father of all things, says Heraclitus. And it is the old conflict between the antisophic, sophistic, or individualistic view of life and the truly philosophic or idealistic view which once more flames up, and from which truth is to arise again rejuvenated. Ibsen is one of the greatest leaders of individualism.

We have seen with what marvellous subtlety Ibsen, in his Epilogue "When We Dead Awaken," follows out his ideas to their final conclusions, and combats artistic idealism, as he does all other ideals, by attempting to show that it is destructive to life. But in "Brand" we are confronted with the *religious* ideal, by whose frosty breath the life of a strong man, of one who is every inch a man, is destroyed. For, according to Ibsen, it is a fatal feature of *all* ideals, that by them the lives of half-hearted and weak men, who only make certain concessions to their ideals, are stunted and distorted; while the lives of strong men, who take their ideals in all seriousness, are *completely* ruined. The strong man, as Ibsen understands him, arrives at a true life only when he recognises all ideals, whether they are called God, humanity, state, society, science, or art, as life-consuming spectres, when once for all he frees himself from them and takes up an entirely independ-

[1] *When We Dead Awaken*, p. 122.

ent attitude; for, when he follows out his ideal, he must perish.

Brand is a strong man in Ibsen's sense of the word; and *he* takes the religious ideal, as he understands it, in good earnest and follows it out to the end. According to Brand's conception, God is an angry and zealous God who suffers no other Gods or idols beside Him. In Brand's opinion, to serve God means to serve Him with body and soul, with all one's possessions, with one's last breath. To serve God means to sacrifice *all* to Him, one's nearest and dearest, one's whole estate, one's wife and child, one's own life. Where the salvation of a soul is concerned, whether that of another or one's own, all regard for earthly prosperity, for happiness, health and life must cease.

This is Brand as he is introduced to us at the very beginning of the drama. As a travelling pastor he is pursuing his way on the snow-covered crest of a mountain in spite of the thick fogs and the threatening danger of precipices, while his companion, a peasant who is hastening to his daughter's death-bed, is turned back by fear of the dangers of the journey. In answer to Brand's questions the peasant declares himself ready to sacrifice his whole property for the peace of his daughter's soul, but not his life, upon which Brand cries out in a voice of thunder, "You know not God, God knows not you."[1]

According to the usual conception, God is a God of love and mercy, — a *deus caritatis*, as He is called at the close of the drama in the Norwegian original, — Who considers the weakness of man and forgives him his sins, without demanding extreme sacrifices of him. But, according to Brand, this is a false ideal, a God of cowardly and feeble minds who do not venture to follow the true ideal to the

[1] *Brand*, Translated by C. H. Herford, 1908, p. 8.

end, and therefore debase and falsify it. In agreement with the idea which the people has of its "household idol,"[1] the painter Einar represents God as a silver-haired old man Who, in Brand's opinion, as an *old man* has no true strength or true life within Him, and for this reason appears so gentle, forgiving, indulgent, loving, and pacifying, appears as a God of love and mercy, as *deus caritatis*. People, in fact, shape a God of their own as they wish Him to be, they do not want to offer too great sacrifices to their God, nor do they intend to remain faithful to their ideal to the end. For this reason they imagine their God to be so gentle and their ideal so insignificant.

To be sure, it is easy to satisfy a God of love and mercy, a *deus caritatis*, Who takes into consideration the weakness of man. But Brand desires to pursue his way to the end, without bargaining for concessions with his ideal, and therefore he imagines God, as he declares to the painter Einar and the latter's bride Agnes, to be not a gentle, kindly disposed, indulgent old man, but a hard, severe, inflexible, angry, and robust man, Who, young and strong, "like Hercules," takes possession of everything by force, always carries His point, and never yields till the soul of man belongs to Him entirely, and no other god, whatever be his name, has his throne in it. "Nought or All,"[2] is Brand's motto. A zealous, angry God demands everything for Himself, and only when we have sacrificed All to Him, with a joyful and willing heart, can we attain to His presence, do we behold His face are we partakers of His peace. He who does not give up everything for God, has given nothing, he has only lost what he has given up, without obtaining anything in return. Therefore, if we do not wish to offer *All*, it is better to offer *Nought*. Brand says to Einar:

[1] *Brand*, p. 25. — [2] Id. pp. 84, 93, 114, 252.

"Bliss for your souls ye would receive,
Not utterly and wholly live.
Ye need, such feebleness to brook,
A God who'll through his fingers look,
Who, like yourselves, is hoary grown,
And keeps a cap for his bald crown.
Mine is another kind of God!
Mine is a storm, where thine's a lull,
Implacable where thine's a clod,
All-loving there, where thine is dull;
And He is young like Hercules,
No hoary sipper of life's lees!" [1]

The consistent pursuance of this ideal, the service of this God of Wrath, of this "implacable Hercules," must lead to the ruin of Brand and all that belong to him. Such a God is identical with death. Agnes, too, recognises this in the end, when, influenced and guided by Brand, she gives up to the dreadful spectre one portion of her life after the other:

"Agnes.
[Gazes before her; then, trembling]
Now manifest and open lies,
Abysmal as the depths of space,
That mystic Word.

Brand.
What word?

Agnes.
He dies
Who sees Jehovah face to face." [2]

These words are so significant that the poet, in a later passage, once more makes Agnes pronounce them:

[1] *Brand*, p. 25. — [2] Id. p. 162.

"Thou forget'st the word of dread:
Whoso sees Jehovah dies!" [1]

Life is only possible, in Ibsen's opinion, with the *deus caritatis*, the God of love and mercy, the God of cowardly and weak minds who are neither in earnest about following their will to live nor about pursuing their ideal, who, therefore, halt midway, waver, compromise, and form the dull and stupid multitude. To be sure, in Ibsen's opinion, this life with the God of cowardly and weak minds is no true life. If, on the other hand, it is shown that the strong man must necessarily be wrecked by the *consistent* pursuance of the religious ideal, by the service of Brand's God of Wrath, then indeed, in Ibsen's opinion, nothing remains for a real and genuine personality but to renounce *all* ideals of whatever kind, whether they be partially or completely pursued; nothing remains for the strong man but to renounce the "household idol" of the stupid multitude, as well as the inflexible and "implacable" God of Brand, that is, nothing remains but to assume an independent attitude as an individual, and to seek the true and real life only in one's own personality, only in oneself, in one's own caprice, in one's own freely developed will to life, or better, "will to power." Brand, however, does not recognise, that "God is our *oldest lie*," [2] as Nietzsche says. Brand follows out the religious ideal to the end and ruins himself and his dear ones.

The desert mountain regions of ice and snow that freeze the blood and kill all life are for Ibsen a symbol of the chilling breath of *all* ideals that destroys every kind of individual life. Thus finally Brand, after having shown his parishioners the half-heartedness of the conception they had hitherto formed of God, and after having inspired

[1] *Brand*, p. 176. — [2] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 197.

them with enthusiasm for his *perfect* ideal, leads them high up into the barren mountains that threaten suffering and ruin. But when it becomes clear to Brand's followers what he really desires of them with his "Nought or All," when suffering and want make themselves felt and threaten them with destruction, they are easily turned away from the consistent pursuance of the religious ideal by the representatives of order, state and church, and soon brought back to the customary half-heartedness of life, to the service of the "household idol."

The representatives of custom and order and of the traditional art of forcing back all individual effort and life in favour of the generality, the representatives of state and church so hateful to Ibsen, the Mayor and the Dean, are painted with pungent irony. Vainly the Dean had attempted to bring Brand's strong personality under the yoke of tradition and state authority. Brand's wilfulness revolted all the more against these endeavours. How could he whose feelings were entirely those of a strong man willing to follow his ideal to the end, in defiance of the whole world — how could such a man take into consideration the claims of the community or of the State! Of what concern is any kind of temporal community to the religious fanatic, to the individualist in the matter of religion? The more the Dean makes it clear to Brand that the latter attaches too little importance to "Wont and Use," that the essential point is not "What this man and what that man needed," but rather that "all the flock,"[1] the community, has to be considered and state and church have to be served, the more Brand's whole being revolts against the subordination of his free personality to the laws on which the existence of church and state is founded. The Dean plainly declares,

[1] *Brand*, p. 200.

"That all strength, sever'd, is unstable,
And death-doom'd who the world defies.
When God desires a man to fall
He makes him an original,"[1]

or better: "He makes him an individual," Norwegian: "*individ.*"

The individual, whatever may be his importance, has to adapt himself to the whole and must, therefore, try to lay aside whatever places him in hostile opposition to others. Accordingly the Dean says to Brand:

"'Humane the age is,' says the Mayor:
And if humanely it be met
Will bring you fame and fortune yet.
But all your angles must be rounded,
Your gnarls and bosses scraped and pounded!
You must grow sleek as others do,
All singularities eschew,
If you would labour without let."[2]

But Brand can only follow his own special path. Thoroughly individual in his sentiments, he also conceives of God as of an individual who knows of no adaptation, forbearance, consideration, or mildness, but harshly and rigorously demands everything for himself, even as God, on His part, has fully sacrificed Himself in His Son. For Christ had to drain the cup to the dregs. But this particular path leads Brand to his death; for, in Ibsen's opinion, God, the religious ideal, is just as destructive to life as all other ideals are. Only a strong man will not let himself be deterred from the pursuance of his ideal either by misery or death; but misery and death alone are his reward. The dull and torpid multitude may indeed be dragged along for part of the way when made conscious

[1] *Brand*, p. 204. — [2] Id. p. 208.

of the half-hearted manner in which they have hitherto conducted their lives, but their ardour is not of long duration; when misery and death make their appearance, the ideal energy comes to an end. So at last Brand finds himself deserted by the people on his way to the heights. But of what significance these heights are for Ibsen is plainly enough shown by the fact that he then makes the crazy Gerd Brand's sole companion. The reflected image of the religious ideal is madness. All ideals are lies, according to Ibsen. But lies are just as much a contrast to reality as are the delusions of a lunatic. And if the priest officiating in church in his vestments and winning the souls of men for his religious ideal, is, according to Ibsen, a destroyer of true, warm, individual life, its reflected image is the fatal mountain in the "Ice-church," [1] from whose sides roll down the avalanches. Gerd says:

"Ugly-church's day is past;
Mine shall get its due at last.
There the priest stands, tall and strong
Snowy surplice swathes his flank,
Woven of winter's drip and dank,
If you'd see him, come along;
Parish-church is bare and blank;
My priest has so brave a song,
That the whole earth rings to hear it." [2]

It is the dreadful "Ice-church," the church of death which, in Ibsen's opinion, is the right place for Brand with his religious ideal, and at which, indeed, he arrives in the end. Madness leads from the reality of life to death, and so, in Ibsen's opinion, does every consistent pursuance of an ideal. Christ also was destroyed by it, and the crazy Gerd sees in Brand himself Him who was once nailed to

[1] *Brand*, p. 34. — [2] Id.p. 119.

the cross. Insanity salutes Brand as the Saviour and falls at his feet to worship him. An appalling irony. Gerd says:

"Gerd.
Let me look upon thy hands!

Brand.
On my hands?

Gerd.
They're pierced and torn!
In thy hair the blood-dew stands,
Riven by the fanged thorn
In thy forehead fiercely thrust,
Thou the crucifix didst span!
In my childhood Father told me
'Twas another, long ago,
Far away, that suffer'd so; —
Now I see he only fool'd me; —
Thou art the Redeeming man!

Brand.
Get thee hence!

Gerd.
Shall I not fall
Low before thy feet and pray?" [1]

But in Brand the original will to live still struggles with the life-destroying ideal. He has sacrificed wife and child, but not "gladly." [2] His wounds are burning painfully, and in spirit he longingly stretches out his arms to what, according to his religious conception, he must himself call his *idols*, namely, wife and child, and therefore his ideal,

[1] *Brand*, p. 258. — [2] Id. p. 174.

his "all-loving" God, who demands *everything* for Himself, even the longing of his heart, his longing for life, happiness, and love, continually repels him and refuses him peace:

"Invisible Choir.

[In the sough of the storm.]

Never shalt thou win His spirit;
Thou in mortal flesh wast born:
Spurn His bidding or revere it;
Equally thou art forlorn

Brand.

[Repeats the words, and says softly.]

Woe's me, woe; I well may fear it!
Stood He not, and saw me pray,
Sternly smote my prayer away?
All I loved He has demanded,
All the ways of light seal'd fast,
Made me battle single-handed,
And be overthrown at last!

The Choir.

[Louder, above him.]

Worm, thou mayst not win His spirit, —
For Death's cup thou hast consumed;
Fear His Will, or do not fear it,
Equally thy work is doom'd.

Brand.

[Softly.]

Agnes, Alf, the gladsome life
When unrest and pain I knew not —
I exchanged for tears and strife,
In my own heart plunged the knife, —
But the fiend of evil slew not.

The Choir.

[Tender and alluring.]

Dreamer, thine is not His spirit,
Nought to Him thy gifts are worth;
Heaven thou never shalt inherit,
Earth-born creature, live for Earth!

Brand.

[Breaks into soft weeping.]

Alf and Agnes, come unto me!
Lone I sit upon this peak!
Keen the north wind pierces through me,
Phantoms seize me, chill ones, meek —!"[1]

Only a short time before his death, when Gerd is already pointing the gun, the report of which detaches the avalanches from the mountain-side, Brand *completely* identifies himself with his religious ideal and is perfectly filled with the joy of it:

Brand.

[Bursts into tears.]

Jesus, I have cried and pleaded, —
From thy bosom still outcast;
Thou hast pass'd me by unheeded
As a well-worn word is passed;
Of salvation's vesture, stain'd
With the wine of tears unfeign'd,
Let me clasp one fold at last!

Gerd.

[Pale.]

What is this? Then weepest, thou,
Hot tears, till thy cheek is steaming, —

[1] *Brand*, pp. 248, 249.

And the glacier's death-shroud streaming
Silently from crag and crest, —
And my memory's frozen tides
Melt to weeping in my breast, —
And the snowy surplice glides
Down the Ice-priest's giant sides —
[Trembling.]
Man, why wept'st thou not till now?

Brand.

[Radiant, clear, and with an air of renewed youth.]
Through the Law an ice-track led, —
Then broke summer overhead!
Till to-day I strove alone
To be God's pure tablet-stone; —
From to-day my life shall stream
Lambent, glowing, as a dream.
The ice-fetters break away,
I can weep — and kneel — and pray.
[Sinks upon his knees.]" [1]

The ideal has gained a complete victory, Brand has entirely renounced his inner, true, individual life, and the death of the body, caused by the thundering avalanche, is at the same time a symbol of the inner death, that of the soul, for in Ibsen's opinion Brand, like Rubek, is a "dead" man, before his bodily death occurs.

"John Gabriel Borkman" forms a very remarkable parallel to Ibsen's Epilogue, "When We Dead Awaken," and to his "Brand." Here again the idealistic dreamer Borkman sacrifices to his supposed higher task the woman of his choice and of his heart. It was Ella Rentheim whom he truly loved, who formed the true complement

[1] *Brand*, pp. 260, 261.

to his being, who was his in all her thoughts and endeavours, and to whom all the desires of his manhood were directed. But he was under the spell of his higher mission, the death-bringing ideal. To his ideal task, that of bringing to light the hidden treasures of the earth in order to spread human happiness, he sacrificed the happiness of his own life. Instead of providing for himself, he thought he was bound to provide for humanity. In doing so, he did not shrink from crime, from embezzling money entrusted to him. But what alone weighs heavily in the balance, in the judgment of the individualist Ibsen, is that he sold his love, that he renounced Ella Rentheim in favour of his friend, the barrister Hinkel, so as to obtain through him the influential position of bank-director, by means of which he intended to gain possession of "the kingdom, and the power, and the glory."

Ibsen likes using phrases from the Bible, which always have a subtle and profound meaning with him. At the end of the Lord's Prayer it is said of God, "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory." But the idea of God is, according to Ibsen, only one of the many kinds of life-destroying ideals. Brand is ruined by this kind of spectre. In John Gabriel's soul it assumes the form of the mercantile and industrial ideal. While Brand desires to lead men to the true knowledge of his rigid ideal of God, Borkman, the miner's son, wishes to shake all the treasures of the earth out of their sleep, to awaken the slumbering spirits of gold, and to bestow happiness on mankind by raising commerce and industry to a height of prosperity and power undreamt of throughout the world. But stern reality destroyed his visionary dreams, brought on him defeat, disgrace, and loss of liberty, without, however, opening his eyes to the great wrong he had been guilty of towards the woman of his heart as well as to-

wards himself. To the last he remains an idealist whom even the strongest compulsion of reality is unable to rouse from his idealistic dream.

Like the sculptor Rubek, who is full of his artistic ideal, Borkman, who is engrossed by the mercantile and industrial ideal, is called a *dead* man. According to Ibsen all ideals are opposed to real, true, individual life, and kill not only him who is himself under their sway, but all those, too, who come under the influence of, or are connected with, such an idealist. Again and again with Ibsen the life-destroying breath of every ideal is typified by the life-destroying cold of ice and snow-covered regions. Borkman, like Rubek and Brand, dies on a snow-covered peak, in a cold winter night, after he had long been a "dead" man, as "dead" as, in Ibsen's opinion, every true idealist is:

"Mrs. Borkman.

He was a miner's son, John Gabriel Borkman. He couldn't live in the fresh air.

Ella Rentheim.

It was rather the cold that killed him.

Mrs. Borkman.

[Shakes her head.] The cold, you say? The cold — that had killed him long ago.

Ella Rentheim.

[Nodding to her.] Yes — and changed us two into shadows.

Mrs. Borkman.

You are right there.

Ella Rentheim.

[With a painful smile.] A dead man and two shadows — that is what the cold has made of us.

Mrs. Borkman.

Yes, the coldness of heart."[1]

How entirely engrossed Borkman is by his ideal dream is shown by his last visit with Ella to the snow-covered top of the mountain from which his eye can take in his illusory kingdom. In imagination he sees "the smoke of the great steamships out on the fjord." "They come and they go. They weave a network of fellowship all round the world. They shed light and warmth over the souls of men in many thousands of homes. That was what I dreamed of doing," says Borkman. In imagination he hears the factories working. Borkman says: "My factories! All those that I would have created! Listen! Do you hear them humming? The night shift is on — so they're working night and day. Hark! hark! the wheels are whirling and the bands are flashing — round and round and round."[2]

And all these things are "only like the outworks"[3] around his kingdom, his ideal kingdom of human happiness, a happiness to be produced by the creation of countless new values by means of mercantile and industrial activity. There they lie, those values, deeply buried in the earth. There — far away — where the mountain chains soar and tower aloft, one behind the other, there lies the vast, infinite, inexhaustible kingdom that John Gabriel wished to open up, so that a well-spring of blessings might pour forth over the whole earth. The other men who fall upon this kingdom to turn it to account, are in Bork-

[1] *John Gabriel Borkman.* Translated by W. Archer, 1897, p. 201. — [2] Id. pp. 193, 194. — [3] Id. p. 195.

man's eyes only "robbers and plunderers,"[1] for they desire to exploit it for egotistical purposes alone, whereas he himself represented objective, ideal interests.

And because he became a criminal only for the sake of higher, ideal interests, he acquitted himself. He was under the sway of his ideal. He was indissolubly bound up with it. In fact John Gabriel Borkman was an idealist through and through, and therefore he says, "All the world knows what I've done amiss. But it doesn't know why I did it; why I had to do it. People don't understand that I had to, because I was myself — because I was John Gabriel Borkman — myself, and not another."[2]

How sharply he draws the distinction between himself and those who, from a *selfish* interest, come to abuse their power and to commit a crime, is shown by his words, "Perhaps no one but myself would have done it. But that would have been because they hadn't my brains. And if they had done it, it would not have been with my aims in view. The act would have been a different act. In short, I have acquitted myself."[3]

And what else could he do but acquit himself, for he himself had sacrificed to his ideal mission in life, to "the irresistible vocation"[4] he felt within him, what was "the dearest thing in the world" to him. In answer to Ella's question, "I was the dearest thing in the world to you?" Borkman answers, "I seem to remember something of the sort."[5]

But in Ibsen's as well as in Ella Rentheim's opinion, Borkman's real crime consists in his having renounced what was dearest to him personally, for the sake of an ideal illusion. He thereby killed himself and her who was dearest to him. Accordingly Ella says to him: "You

[1] *John Gabriel Borkman*, p. 195. — [2] Id. p. 134. — [3] Id. pp. 136, 37. — [4] Id. p. 136. — [5] Id. p. 106.

have killed the love-life in me. Do you understand what that means? The Bible speaks of a mysterious sin for which there is no forgiveness. I have never understood what it could be; but now I understand. The great, unpardonable sin is to murder the love-life in a human soul . . . You deserted the woman you loved! Me, me, me! What you held dearest in the world you were ready to barter away for gain. That is the double murder you have committed! The murder of your own soul and of mine!"[1]

Ella Rentheim speaks only of the "gain" for the sake of which Borkman betrayed her love. But this gain, the influential position of bank-director, was for Borkman only a means for promoting his ideal purpose, namely, that of making mankind happy. Ella sees here only what lies at hand, the immediate advantage that accrued to Borkman from his betrayal. She does not recognise the real motive power, the life-destroying ideal. Not for the sake of this wretched gain did Borkman cast from him his dearest earthly treasure, the woman he loved, but for the sake of the "kingdom, and the power, and the glory," for the sake of the ideal that was to "awaken all the sleeping spirits of the mine" in order to "create human happiness in wide, wide circles around him."[2]

The loss of Ella weighed far more heavily upon him than he had ever imagined it could weigh. Ella's twin sister, whom he made his wife, could not replace her who was dearest to him on earth, and she inwardly remained a stranger to him. "But," Borkman says, "the great aims I had in life helped me to bear even that. I wanted to have at my command all the sources of power in this country. All the wealth that lay hidden in the soil, and the rocks, and the forests, and the sea — I wanted to

[1] *John Gabriel Borkman*, pp. 110, 111. — [2] Id. p. 140.

gather it all into my hands, to make myself master of it all, and so to promote the well-being of many, many thousands."[1]

While in the dramas we have hitherto considered it is a man who has committed "the one mortal sin"[2] by destroying his own personal happiness and life as well as that of the woman he loves, for the sake of an artistic, or religious, or commercial and industrial ideal, which turns men into ghost-like, "dead" beings, in the drama which bears the title "Ghosts," it is a woman, Mrs. Helen Alving, who has made the fatal mistake of allowing herself to be ruled in the choice and treatment of her husband by other considerations than simply by the individual demands of her own heart. Only it was not any Heaven-storming ideal, any enormous, single, particular Ghost, as in the cases of Rubek, Brand, and Borkman, that led her astray from the path of life — from what Ibsen considers the only true life — but rather the dregs of all those "ideals" or "ghosts" which hold sway in Society, naturally find expression in the opinion of kindly-disposed and solicitous relations, such as a mother, as aunts, and which by the "superstitious awe for duty and the proprieties,"[3] constrain and hinder individual, independent action. When Helen had to decide the happiness of her life and choose her husband, she did not dare listen to her own heart which ached for Manders, but gave ear to the prudent advice of her mother and aunts, and chose the rich Alving.

From the beginning she was under the restraint of "duty and obligation"[4] towards others, so that it never entered her head, that she might also have a "duty and obligation" towards herself, and perhaps ought not to act con-

[1] *John Gabriel Borkman*, p. 112. — [2] Id. p. 110. — [3] *Ghosts. A Family-Drama*, ed. by W. Archer, [1901], p. 82. — [4] Id. p. 86.

trary to the rights and happiness of her own heart. From the beginning, in the surroundings among which she lived, she had been ruled by the doctrine expressed so characteristically by Pastor Manders: "What right have we human beings to happiness? We have simply to do our duty, Mrs. Alving!" [1]

So Helen looked upon it as her duty, from the first, to follow the advice of her mother and aunts. She was too big a "coward" as she called herself, to obey the impulse of her own heart, and, without timid considerations, to grasp happiness; she was too much under the influence of all the "ghosts" that "walked" in herself and in her surroundings, too much under the influence of views that were hostile to life and happiness, of views in which all sorts of washed-out ideals of a religious and social nature demanded her subordination to "law and order," imposed upon her "duty and obligation," and robbed her of "freedom" and thus of true life. So at last the individual has been changed into some phantom, into the advocate of some vague tradition or ideal, in a word has become a "ghost."

"Ghosts," or ideals, according to Ibsen, make themselves felt in all social life, and therefore also appear in the newspapers which reflect social life. But these "ghosts" or ideals seldom take a distinct form and seldom exercise such singular influence as to draw a whole life under their spell, as, for instance, in the cases of Rubek, Brand, and Borkman. So far as the influence of these "ghosts" on society in general goes, they have, on the contrary, little strength in themselves and could easily be overcome, if men were not so "cowardly." These "ghosts" are only dead remains of old ideals, and yet their influence poisons life. Accordingly Ibsen makes

[1] *Ghosts*, p. 56.

Mrs. Alving say: "I almost think we are all of us ghosts, Pastor Manders. It is not only what we have inherited from our father and mother that 'walks' in us. It is all sorts of dead ideas, and lifeless old beliefs, and so forth. They have no vitality, but they cling to us all the same, and we cannot shake them off. Whenever I take up a newspaper, I seem to see ghosts gliding between the lines. There must be ghosts all the country over, as thick as the sands of the sea. And then we are one and all, so pitifully afraid of the light."[1]

Helen, too, had been "afraid of the light," when the sun of her happiness was about to rise and love for Manders sprang up in her heart; she was too much of a "coward" to look up to where life and happiness beckoned to her, but acted rather in accordance with such "lifeless old beliefs," as, for instance, that young people must yield to older, that one must obey one's parents, that one's own wishes must be silenced when they are not approved of by one's relations, that one must consider one's position in society, and must live in keeping with one's social rank, and so on. These "lifeless old beliefs" agree quite well with "all sorts of dead ideas," for instance, with the idea of this earth's being a vale of tears, and of our not being born to happiness, but to undertake duties, to serve others and to live for others, to serve whom and to live for whom it is *no* pleasure to ourselves. Thus worldly and spiritual advantages were strangely mixed and talked into a young girl until she believed that by marrying a rich man whom she did not love, she would procure for herself and her family a position in society and, at the same time, prove herself an ideal character with good prospects of Heaven hereafter.

[1] *Ghosts. A Family-Drama*, ed. by W. Archer, [1901], p. 85.

Extremely hard and painful experiences in her married life, and the reading of modern literature, then opened her eyes so widely to that which was absolutely reprehensible in her way of acting, that she did not hesitate to compare her own mode of action with that of the carpenter Engstrand, who, as Manders expressed it, was depraved enough to "go and marry a fallen woman, for a miserable three hundred dollars,"[1] — a woman who, as Engstrand knew, did not care for him at all. Manders lays stress on "the immorality of such a connection! For money —!" Mrs. Alving answered him, "Then what have you to say of me? I went and married a fallen man." And it was a man who did not expect any deeper feeling from her than did Engstrand from the "fallen woman" he had married "for money" or she from him; and, as with them the three hundred dollars had turned the scales, so also in her marriage with Alving a "price" had played the most important part. Pastor Manders, who will have nothing to do with modern literature, shows himself to be completely obsessed by the traditional view, that a man may be allowed all sorts of excesses without detriment to his honour, while the "fallen woman" draws contempt upon herself. Quite shocked, he exclaims, "Why — good Heavens! — what are you talking about? A fallen man!" But Mrs. Alving draws the bitter logical conclusion: "Do you think Alving was any purer when I went with him to the altar than Johanna was when Engstrand married her?" Manders, entirely prejudiced by "dead ideas and lifeless old beliefs," answers, "Well, but there is a world of difference between the two cases —" Mrs. Alving observes, "Not so much difference after all — except in the price: — a miserable three hundred dollars and a whole fortune." Manders exclaims, "How can you compare such abso-

[1] *Ghosts*, p. 76.

lutely dissimilar cases? You had taken counsel with your own heart and with your natural advisers."

He did not represent things as they were; he, too, in a way, was "afraid of the light" and a "coward," for he must have known whom Helen's heart craved. She therefore answers (*without looking at him*): "I thought you understood where what you call my heart had strayed to at the time."[1] The "ghosts" in him would not, however, allow him to admit that; his reputation might have suffered by it; consideration for "law and order" and for the opinions of other people was too strong in him. He had not wanted to see it at the time. He (*distantly*) explains, "Had I understood anything of the kind, I should not have been a daily guest in your husband's house." Mrs. Alving emphasises the chief point, without letting herself be disconcerted. "At any rate, the fact remains that with myself I took no counsel whatever."[2]

Manders, however, still held captive by the "ghosts," considers as of no consequence what Mrs. Alving, striving after freedom as she is, looks upon as the chief thing. That we should take counsel with our own heart, with our own self before everything, *that* we are not "bidden" to do. It is enough if we listen to others. No matter if Helen did not take counsel with herself, she did so, says Pastor Manders, at least with her "nearest relatives," as her "duty bade" her — with her mother and her two aunts. With bitter scorn Mrs. Alving answers him: "Yes, that is true. Those three cast up the account for me. Oh, it's marvellous how clearly they made out that it would be downright madness to refuse such an offer. If mother could only see me now, and know what all that grandeur has come to!"

[1] *Ghosts. A Family-Drama*, ed. by W. Archer [1901], p. 77. — [2] Id. p. 78.

For Manders, who lets all his true, individual feeling be kept in the background by a ghostlike, bloodless view of things, which takes nothing into account but "law and order," quite indifferent as to whether or not these ghosts "law and order" drain out the very life-blood of man, and above all, the life-blood of Mrs. Alving, the very being whose life and happiness ought to have been dear to him, and ought to have determined his own life and happiness; for him, it was enough that during Mrs. Alving's married life, nothing had happened that was directly unlawful, nothing which offended against "law and order." *That* suffices to reassure him and therefore he says, "Nobody can be held responsible for the result. This, at least, remains clear: your marriage was in full accordance with law and order." Whereupon Mrs. Alving answers, quite in the sense of our anarchist poet, "Oh, that perpetual law and order! I often think that is what does all the mischief in this world of ours."[1]

It has already been pointed out that Ibsen himself thinks so. The reader may be reminded of the lines Ibsen addressed to Georg Brandes: "The State" (with its lawful order) "is the curse of the individual. Let the idea of the State be undermined, let voluntary choice and intellectual kinship be set up as the sole determinatives of a union, and we shall have the beginning of a freedom that will be of some use. A changing of the form of government is merely a retail-business on a small scale. Perhaps a little more or a little less so, yet, take it all in all, a wretched concern. The State is rooted in time, in time it will culminate. Things greater than it will fall; all religion will fall. Neither the conceptions of morality nor the forms of art have an eternity before them. How much are we, at bottom, bound to uphold? Who will

[1] *Ghosts*, p. 78.

guarantee to me that on Jupiter twice two will not be five."[1]

That is to say, if there is no guarantee that two and two are not five up there, then, that two and two are four is no generally valid law at all, and, if it suits him, the egoist has even here on earth as little need to hold himself bound to this law as to any other "law and order," and may assume, where individual personal desire comes into question, and as occasion may demand, that two and two are five, or six, or twenty thousand, or any other sum in the endless series of numbers.

From this it may be seen how boldly Ibsen draws the final inferences entailed by the anarchistic, or individualistic, or antisophical point of view; but it may also be seen to what an absurd conclusion this one-sided, personally prejudiced point of view leads. Because in many cases, as, for instance, in the case of Mrs. Alving, "law and order" or what, in this case, are so called, "do mischief," therefore *all* "law and order" are likewise to blame for "*all* the mischief in this world," and therefore the fixing of the value of all kinds of "law and order" even to the laws of multiplication, addition and substraction, is to be left to personal caprice or purely individual interpretation. This is, indeed, throwing away the good with the bad. Pastor Manders is certainly a timid, absurd lover of order, and it is certainly quite out of place, after all he has learned of Mrs. Alving's married life and of all that about which we have still to speak in detail, to try to reassure himself that this marriage "was in full accordance with law and order." But shall we, because Pastor Manders is wrong, misconstrue the great truth that "law and order" are the foundation of all existence, of all lower and higher life, and that twice two are four all the world

[1] *Henrik Ibsen's Sämtliche Werke*, vol. X, pp. 159, 160.

over, seeing that the same "law and order" hold good everywhere in nature? If on and for Jupiter two and two should not be four, how then could our astronomers with such mathematical exactitude calculate the movements of Jupiter in advance and to the minute? And is there not also a law and an order for the innermost life, for the heart, which draw a woman like Helen to the one man, and make the other repellent to her, as the substances in the inorganic world attract and repel one another, in obedience to the "law and order" ordained by nature? The reader may be reminded of Goethe's "Elective Affinities."[1] One must be able to distinguish between "law and order" which are founded on the nature of things, and those that are artificially constructed, have their origin in man's want of intelligence, and are often directly antagonistic to the nature of things. It is just the same with ideals. Because there are ideals which are, in truth, nothing but vain imaginings, and bring to grief those who follow them, by cloaking reality and so leading astray their devotees, we should not ignore the fact that there are true ideals full of real life, that form the guiding motives in the development of humanity, and for which it is, indeed, worth while to sacrifice one's life and all one has.

To be sure, these ideals are not built up on lies, as are those about which Pastor Manders and Mrs. Alving speak. Mrs. Alving thinks, if she were not such a "coward," she would tell her son Oswald the plain truth, namely, that his father was a "fallen man" who had led "a dissolute life."[2] Manders, always true to his character as a lover of order and influenced by "ghosts," answers, "You call it 'cowardice' to do your plain duty? Have you forgotten that a son ought to love and honour his father

[1] *Novels and Tales by Goethe*, 1903, pp. 1-245. — [2] *Ghosts*, p. 62.

and mother?" Whereupon Mrs. Alving very rightly remarks, "Do not let us talk in such general terms. Let us ask: Ought Oswald to love and honour Chamberlain Alving?"

"Manders.

Is there no voice in your motherly heart that forbids you to destroy your son's ideals?

Mrs. Alving.

But what about the truth?

Manders.

But what about the ideals?

Mrs. Alving.

Oh — ideals, ideals! If only I were not such a coward!

Manders.

Do not despise ideals, Mrs. Alving; they will avenge themselves cruelly. Take Oswald's case: he, unfortunately, seems to have few enough ideals as it is; but I can see that his father stands before him as an ideal.

Mrs. Alving.

Yes, that is true.

Manders.

And this habit of mind you have yourself implanted and fostered by your letters.

Mrs. Alving.

Yes; in my superstitious awe for duty and the proprieties, I lied to my boy, year after year. Oh, what a coward — what a coward I have been!

Manders.

You have established a happy illusion in your son's heart, Mrs. Alving; and assuredly you ought not to undervalue it.

Mrs. Alving.

Hm; who knows whether it is so happy after all——?"[1]

We see from this that Pastor Manders wants her to cling to an ideal that is nothing more than a "happy illusion," that is founded only on imagination, on lies, and we must surely acknowledge that Mrs. Alving is right, when she comes to the conclusion that such an ideal is worth nothing, and that it was cowardly to nurture artificially a mere illusion in her son's mind, instead of honouring the truth. But must, therefore, all ideals be founded upon lies? Is Dr. Relling in "The Wild Duck" right in every case, when he says, "Do not use the foreign word 'ideals,' when we have the plain, honest word 'lies' for it?"

Although Helen at first unresistingly sacrificed her happiness to the "ghosts," by following the man she did not love into his home, it was not long before the desire for liberty rose in her breast, and she tried to shake off the yoke which was growing unbearable. And Alving did nothing to win her to him, but much to repel her more and more. He was not only before his marriage a "fallen man," as his wife expressed it, but made no attempt to rise to greater heights after marriage; he sank ever lower and lower in his continued dissolute life so that Helen felt "infinitely miserable" and "after less than a year of married life"[2] left her husband, and obeying her inner voice at last, betook herself to Pastor Manders to place her destiny alone and for ever in his hands.

[1] *Ghosts*, pp. 80-82. — [2] Id. p. 56.

Though Mrs. Alving, in taking this step, entirely freed herself from all the "ghosts" that were robbing her of life, she had not yet the independence, strength, and courage to hold fast to her liberty, for she found a stumbling-block in that concentration of all that was "ghost-like" as shown in the person of Pastor Manders, the man who could and ought to have determined her happiness, but who prevailed upon her, out of respect "for duty and the proprieties," to sacrifice her life-blood to "all sorts of dead ideas" and "lifeless old beliefs," and to become a "dead woman," a "ghost" herself. Pastor Manders had no feeling or understanding for her distress and longing. With everyday, bloodless, ghostlike instruction and precepts, he smothered the re-awakening life and the desire for liberty that was in her, and so led her back to the path of duty and to the home of her lawful husband, changing her from a re-awakened, living being, into a "dead" woman that considered only "duty and the proprieties." Pastor Manders thereby at the same time proves himself to be "dead." Yet he is not, like his self-willed and much stronger colleague Brand, completely obsessed by the "ghost" or religious ideal to which Brand, without any consideration for himself, offered everything. No! Manders' attitude is such that quite a number of duties and considerations are his criterion, namely, consideration for the opinion of the world and of his colleagues, for his reputation, for his social rank, for all sorts of social and religious "duties." His conversation is always interlarded with general phrases; so that he is not the advocate for *one* great "ghost" which absorbs his whole life, but rather for the "ghosts" of numerous washed-out ideals, without strength or power, which are only effective because people are too "cowardly" to break their spell. Mrs. Alving had once, when she left her husband's house, shown courage enough to

shake off this spell, but her courage sank when the only man who should have helped her to maintain her liberty proved himself to be too much prejudiced by all that was "ghostly" to be able to do so. So once again she turned back from life into her grave.

The following particularly characteristic fragment of the conversation between Helen and Manders may here be quoted:

"Manders.

Do you remember that after less than a year of married life you stood on the verge of an abyss? That you forsook your house and home? That you fled from your husband? Yes, Mrs. Alving — fled, fled, and refused to return to him, however much he begged and prayed you?

Mrs. Alving.

Have you forgotten how infinitely miserable I was in that first year?

Manders.

It is the very mark of the spirit of rebellion to crave for happiness in this life. What right have we human beings to happiness? We have simply to do our duty, Mrs. Alving! And your duty was to hold firmly to the man you had once chosen, and to whom you were bound by the holiest ties.

Mrs. Alving.

You know very well what sort of life Alving was leading—what excesses he was guilty of.

Manders.

I know very well what rumours there were about him; and I am the last to approve the life he led in his young days, if report did not wrong him. But a wife is not appointed to be her husband's judge. It was your

duty to bear with humility the cross which a Higher Power had, in its wisdom, laid upon you. But instead of that you rebelliously throw away the cross, desert the backslider whom you should have supported, go and risk your good name and reputation, and—nearly succeed in ruining other people's reputation into the bargain.

Mrs. Alving.

Other people's? One other person's, you mean.

Manders.

It was incredibly reckless of you to seek refuge with me.

Mrs. Alving.

With our clergyman? With our intimate friend?

Manders.

Just on that account. Yes, you may thank God that I possessed the necessary firmness; that I succeeded in dissuading you from your wild designs; and that it was vouchsafed me to lead you back to the path of duty, and home to your lawful husband.

Mrs. Alving.

Yes, Pastor Manders, that was certainly your work.

Manders.

I was but a poor instrument in a Higher Hand."[1]

Ibsen here shows the consequences of such a mode of action; how, from a state of affairs that so deeply involves all that is "ghostlike," only that which, in its turn, is „ghostlike" and incapable of living can be developed. Mrs. Alving has a son, but this son was born with a tendency to a serious disease of the brain which seizes him in the best years of his youth, and brings

[1] *Ghosts*, pp. 56, 57.

him living death. He has inherited this tendency to insanity from his father, whose "excesses" and "dissolute life" are to blame for it. Because the "family doctor" had thought of such consequences he had, according to Mrs. Alving's account, made use of the expression "dissolute" with reference to Chamberlain Alving's life. And what a life it was that Mrs. Alving had to share with her husband in order to keep him at home and prevent his spreading the disgrace abroad! Mrs. Alving believed indeed, that in the interest of her child, she must, by all the means in her power, avert a public scandal, so that the name of her child's father might be kept stainless. Mrs. Alving explains: "I had borne a great deal in this house. To keep him at home in the evenings, and at night, I had to make myself his boon companion in his secret orgies up in his room. There I have had to sit alone with him, to clink glasses and drink with him, and to listen to his ribald, silly talk. I have had to fight with him to get him dragged to bed." In answer to Manders' shocked exclamation, "And you were able to bear all this!" Mrs. Alving answers, "I had to bear it for my little boy's sake." [1]

But worse was in store for her. Chamberlain Alving offered his wife the insult of lowering himself to an intimacy with the servant-maid, the consequence of which was the birth of Regina. Mrs. Alving, who discovered the secret very soon, but too late to prevent the mischief, took the reins into her own hand. She says: "But when the last insult was added; when my own servant-maid —; then I swore to myself: This shall come to an end! And so I took the reins into my own hand—the whole control—over him and everything else. For now I had a weapon against him, you see; he dared not oppose me. It was then I sent Oswald

[1] *Ghosts*, pag. 65.

away from home. He was nearly seven years old, and was beginning to observe and ask questions, as children do. That I could not bear. It seemed to me the child must be poisoned by merely breathing the air of this polluted home. That was why I sent him away. And now you can see, too, why he was never allowed to set foot inside his home so long as his father lived. No one knows what that cost me."[1]

The servant-maid was immediately sent out of the house, and received an indemnity — the three hundred dollars that induced Carpenter Engstrand to marry the "fallen woman." When she died, Mrs. Alving took Regina, her husband's illegitimate daughter, into her house. And when Oswald, who had lived as an artist in Paris, and had been enlightened there by a famous doctor as to the awful danger he was in, came home, he met Regina, a pretty, robust young girl, in the full bloom of her youth. Between the two a love affair now begins to develop that threatens to become a parallel to the love affair between Oswald's father and Regina's mother. Mrs. Alving had just told Pastor Manders how by accident she had discovered the intimacy between her husband and her former servant-maid, Regina's mother, when in the adjoining room quite a similar scene took place between Oswald and Regina, so that Mrs. Alving was here again reminded of the "ghosts," of the dead who rise again for a short time to continue the actions of their lifetime in the scenes of their former activity.

"Mrs. Alving.

It was there *(Pointing towards the first door on the right)*, in the dining-room, that I first came to know of it. I was busy with something in there, and the door

[1] *Ghosts*, pp. 65, 66.

was standing ajar. I heard our house-maid come up from the garden, with water for those flowers. Soon after, I heard Alving come in too. I heard him say something softly to her. And then I heard — *(With a short laugh)* — oh! it still sounds in my ears, so hateful and yet so ludicrous — I heard my own servant-maid whisper, 'Let me go, Mr. Alving! Let me be!'"[1]

Soon after Mrs. Alving had related this incident, Regina's voice is distinctly heard in the dining-room adjoining, saying in a whisper, "Oswald! take care! Are you mad? Let me go!" Mrs. Alving starts in terror. In answer to Pastor Manders' question as to what it might mean, she answers hoarsely, "Ghosts! The couple from the conservatory — risen again!"[2] Only what is incapable of life, dead, ghostlike, can, according to Ibsen, issue from dead, ghostlike conditions; for Oswald carried in him the germs of death, and Regina was — his sister.

Mrs. Alving's endeavours to spread a cloak over her unhappiness and, in deference to "lifeless old beliefs," to keep up the good reputation of her husband, were also "ghostlike." After she had taken the reins into her own hands, she managed her household affairs with excellent success, but all was done in her husband's name, so that he might get the credit for it all, and his dissolute life be hidden under a veil. Manders, whose judgment as to Mrs. Alving's married life, was, as she said, "founded upon nothing but current gossip,"[3] believed that her return to her husband had borne the good fruit that he had prophesied. He says: "And what a blessing has it not proved to you, all the days of your life, that I induced you to resume the yoke of duty and obedience! Did not everything happen as I foretold? Did not Alving turn his back on his errors, as a man should? Did he not live with

[1] *Ghosts*, p. 64. — [2] Id. p. 70. — [3] Id. p. 61.

you from that time, lovingly and blamelessly, all his days? Did he not become a benefactor to the whole district? And did he not help you to rise to his own level, so that you little by little became his assistant in all his undertakings?"[1]

Good Pastor Manders! Ibsen shows how, with his goodness and weakness, with his sense of the ideal and his timid consideration for his own and outside interests, he only did harm, and, to his great horror, was obliged to hear the truth from Mrs. Alving: "The truth is that my husband died as dissolute as he had lived all his days."[2]

But Mrs. Alving would keep up the lie even after the death of her husband, and therefore, with the money that he had brought into the marriage, with the "price" for which she had once sacrificed her happiness, she erected to his memory an Orphanage which was to bear Chamberlain Alving's name, and she had sent for Manders to undertake the management and its chief control. In doing this, Mrs. Alving thinks she is taking the last step necessary in memory of her husband, and henceforth she wishes to live only for herself and her son. But "ghosts" are not so easily banished. Everything that had descended from the late lieutenant is under a curse. Out of ridiculous consideration for "old dead ideas and lifeless old beliefs," Manders neglects to insure the Orphanage buildings, which were just completed. They are burned down, and as Mrs. Alving cannot make good the damage done, the Orphanage ceases to exist. The remaining funds Mrs. Alving makes over to Pastor Manders for him to use according to his own judgment. Engstrand, who was really to blame for the fire, is clever enough to persuade Pastor Manders that he, Pastor Manders, had brought about the catastrophe himself, by the careless

[1] *Ghosts*, pp. 57, 58. — [2] Id. p. 62.

handling of a candle, and thus he talks the frightened Pastor into promising to make over the remaining money to him, Engstrand, for the foundation of a "Sailors' Home," the purposes of which, as Engstrand pretends, were to be religious and humane, whereas in reality his intentions are of a very doubtful nature. It is bitter sarcasm when Ibsen makes Engstrand exclaim: "And the refuge for wandering mariners shall be called 'Chamberlain Alving's Home,' that it shall! And if so be as I'm spared to carry on that house in my own way, I make so bold as to promise that it shall be worthy of the Chamberlain's memory."[1] Instead of a charitable institution, a house for immoral purposes is to be built to the memory of Mrs. Alving's dissolute husband! Thus the "ghosts" are at work.

And though Mrs. Alving had rid herself of the "price," money that her husband had left, the worst share of the inheritance, the incurable disease that her son had inherited from his father, remains to her still. The exertion and excitement caused by the burning down of the Orphanage hasten the outbreak of the disease, and the only thing by which her marriage with Alving could have brought her happiness, namely, her son, on whom her proudest hopes were set, on whom she lavished all the tenderness of a mother's love, sits before her at last, a living corpse, an absolute and incurable idiot, a "ghost" of life, of a life made barren by all these "ghostlike "influences. Regina, the other fruit of this wicked life, had, however, already left the house, intending, if she found no luck elsewhere, to accept Engstrand's pressing invitation, to enter the "Sailors' Home" which was to be founded by her so-called father and called "Chamberlain Alving's Home," and there to live a life such as would have been in accordance with the inclinations of her real father.

[1] *Ghosts*, p. 146.

So here, too, we trace the influence of the "Ghosts." When Oswald comes up from the fire at the Orphanage, Ibsen makes him say: "Everything will burn. All that recalls father's memory is doomed. Here am I, too, burning, down."[1]

Just as Ibsen blames the "ghosts" for Mrs. Alving's having lost her real life and happiness, so he also supposes them to be responsible for the failure of Lieutenant Alving's life, and for the fact that nothing remained that could keep his memory alive; for even the "Chamberlain Alving's Home," about to be founded by Engstrand, is destined to destruction as Oswald prophesies: "It will burn down like the other."[2] Engstrand, as Regina remarks at the beginning, had never had any luck with his undertakings, and so this undertaking will soon go the way of the others.

Lieutenant Alving, however, had originally had plenty of life and strength in him and a mighty longing for happiness and enjoyment. Mrs. Alving tells Oswald of it: "You ought to have known your father when he was a young lieutenant. He was brimming over with the joy of life! It was like a breezy day only to look at him. And what exuberant strength and vitality there was in him!"[3] But ah, the "ghosts!" They hemmed in life so with "law and order," with "obligations," with "duty and the proprieties," with "all sorts of dead ideas, and lifeless old beliefs,"[4] that such a strong nature as Lieutenant Alving's could not live itself out in the right way. And so "it is law and order that do all the mischief in this world of ours."[5] And so Ibsen makes Mrs. Alving explain to Oswald: "Well then, child of joy as he was — for he was like a child in those days — he had to live at home here

[1] *Ghosts*, p. 147. — [2] Id. p. 147. — [3] Id. p. 151. — [4] Id. p. 85. — [5] Id. p. 78.

in a half-grown town, which had no joys to offer him — only dissipations. He had no object in life — only an official position. He had no work into which he could throw himself heart and soul; he had only business. He had not a single comrade who could realise what the joy of life meant — only loungers and boon-companions — So the inevitable happened."[1]

We see that the "joy of life" was there, but the" object in life," the "work," that is, the mission in life, suited to such a strong dashing individuality was wanting. But the fault of this strong man's not having procured for himself "true joys" instead of mere "dissipations," of his not having found for himself any "object in life" instead of taking up an "official position" hemmed in by "duty and the proprieties," of his not having set himself any independent "work," any mission in life, instead of carrying on a "business" that was influenced only by "dead ideas," the fault of it all lay, according to Ibsen's point of view, simply in the social order, so greatly disapproved of by him, with all its "ghostliness" that lends to it an appearance of life. In Ibsen's sense let us, therefore, hope for days when lieutenants may be able to live out their lives in a better way than the late Lieutenant Alving had managed to do. For the present, many of them, no doubt, will follow in his footsteps, not only in the "half-grown" towns, but in the large ones too. Yet he who has true life in him, whether he is lieutenant or carpenter, whether he lives in a "half-grown" town or a large one, will surely not go to rack and ruin, even to-day, but will rather develop an activity promotive of life and happiness, and unhindered by "law and order."

What strikes one as specially remarkable in the case of Stirner, Nietzsche, and Ibsen, is their double life, the

[1] *Ghosts*, p. 151.

inner discord in them which leads them from a simple desire to live out their lives free from the restraint of "law and order" to the most poisonous revilings of that which, whether outwardly or inwardly, appears to them to be a bar to the unrestrained assertion of personal caprice. When this inner discord has not assumed too decided a form, it may be perfectly reconciled with the fact that a man outwardly can lead a perfectly orderly, nay, a painfully strict life, if only, at the same time, the fancy remains that, whenever he desires, he may also renounce all the advantages of such an orderly life and play the free, roaming, robbing, burning, and murdering viking. Yet, after all, it is better to renounce the dangers of the "wilderness," while persuading oneself that this renunciation is of one's own free choice, and that, therefore, one might just as well have acted otherwise. Thus one enjoys the advantages of a well-ordered life, and at the same time has the proud consciousness of being a dangerous "blonde Teuton beast."[1] Therefore people whose social instincts and feelings have become partially morbid, but who in other respects have preserved their full power of reflection, do not as a rule proceed to really perverse actions. But the stronger the morbid impulses grow, and the more difficult it becomes to resist them, the more ideal will appear to such a sufferer a condition in which he can give full rein to these perverse impulses. Hence Nietzsche's great admiration for the times of a Cæsar Borgia, one of the "healthiest of all tropical monsters,"[2] and for the ideal of a superman of whom Nietzsche himself says: "I suspect ye would call my Superman — a devil!"[3]

[1] *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 41. — [2] Id. vol. XII, p. 118. — [3] Id. vol. XI, p. 174 (*Thus Spake Zarathustra.* Translated by Th. Common, 1911).

This mental process may most clearly be made intelligible by reference to a bodily one. A healthy person, after a time of repose, finds it child's play to overcome gravitation, the force by which every atom of his body is drawn downwards; nay, the effort may cause him the greatest pleasure, as is evident from the delight with which all sorts of bodily exercises are practised in the different forms of sport. But when the muscles are exhausted by protracted and excessive exertions, their strength may, indeed, under certain circumstances, just suffice to overcome the force of gravitation and to keep the body erect, but there can then be no question of taking pleasure in doing so, and with each increase of weakness a yet greater feeling of oppressive discomfort ensues. Only extreme necessity, fear of certain destruction, can ultimately deter a man, in a state of extreme exhaustion, from giving way to the force of gravitation, from yielding to the feeling of fatigue and casting himself on the ground. Something similar happens to a morally weak-minded man who still possesses a larger or smaller remnant of altruistic, sympathetic feelings and power of sensible reflection. Morally he keeps more or less perfectly erect, outwardly, perhaps, faultlessly so. But he derives no pleasure from this effort, and as a starving man dreams of luscious food, and a tired man longs for the spot where he may lie down and rest, so the morally weak-minded antisopher pines for freedom from the outer and inner restraint of social impulses, for freedom from the "ascetic ideal."

In conclusion, the brief explanation of how it was possible for this antisophy to attain to such high consideration may be of interest. In our nature there are present good and evil impulses, a striving after the perfect, and on the other hand a lack of appreciation of

what is good and noble. Every average man is a mixture of genius and narrow-mindedness. Now, as the good, the divine in us is satisfied by all that is perfect, beautiful, and elevated, so also all that is base, common, ugly, and perverse finds its echo within us. It is, for instance, a well-known fact that a large number of psychiatrists become insane themselves purely as the result of a kind of mental infection. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that the preachings of narrow selfishness frequently enough fall on fertile soil, that the seed springs up, and that a person quite sensible in other respects is suddenly inspired with an enthusiasm for the productions of megalomania and concealed moral weakness of mind.

Ultimately the productions of a time of discord and ferment fall again into oblivion, but moral, intellectual, and æsthetic narrowness can never be quite expelled from the human heart, for we are men, imperfect beings at variance with ourselves. Only too often do our base instincts conquer us; the better element frequently lives in us merely as a desire, a longing, an idea, and we are easily disconcerted by being called idealists and dreamers. And yet a difference exists between love and egotism, and yet love makes one rich and selfishness makes one poor. To use Schiller's words, "Egotism erects its centre in itself; love places it out of itself in the axis of the universal whole. Love aims at unity, egotism at solitude. Love is the citizen ruler of a flourishing republic, egotism is a despot in a devastated creation[1]... If each man loved all men, each individual would possess the whole world;[2].. egotism is the supremest poverty of a created being."[3]

[1] *Philosophical Letters*, in *Essays Æsthetical and Philosophical by Friedrich Schiller.* Newly translated, 1910, p. 388. — [2] Id. p. 387. — [3] Id. p. 385.

How far Goethe was from disparaging the feeling for truth and from seeing salvation in a hostile attitude towards one's surrounding, as the antisophers do, we learn from his words, "Wisdom lies only in truth."[1] And further, "Everything we call inventing, discovering in the higher sense of the words, is the significant application and employment of an original feeling for truth, which, long and silently cultivated, unexpectedly leads, with the swiftness of lightning, to a productive knowledge. It is a revelation developing from within on the outside, which produces in man a presentiment of his likeness to God. It is a synthesis of world and mind which gives the most blessed assurance of the eternal harmony of existence."[2]

[1] *Reflections and Maxims*, in *Criticisms, Reflections and Maxims of Goethe.* Translated by W. B. Rönnfeldt, p. 155.

[2] *Goethe's Werke* (Hempel), vol. XIX, p. 196.

XII.

THE MYTHS OF PANDORA AND THE FALL OF MAN

SCHOPENHAUER demands of genius "the completest *objectivity*," and Goethe, in exactly the same sense, demands as "the first and last thing in genius love of truth," or the endeavour to grasp reality as it is; the man of genius is, therefore, characterised as he who, guided only by the objective point of view, without thought of paltry personal advantages or disadvantages, un-influenced either by *hope* or *fear*, free from the dominion of paralysing *care*, goes on the way his own genius has marked out for him. So, according to the Pandora Myth, the *inner* godlike nature—that is, genius or the creative power of man—is, in spite of the envy of the gods, preserved by leaving imprisoned in Pandora's ample jar the worst of all evils, namely, inner instability and dependence upon outer good and evil, the wavering to and fro between *hope* and *fear*, the *elpis* (ἐλπίς),[1] the breathless, anxious *suspense* as to what is about to happen, while all the other evils rush out of Pandora's vessel and crush man down to an outwardly ungodlike being, to a worm exposed to every form of destruction. Though outwardly ungodlike, because perishable to the last degree, the inner man rises above his fate and, led by a high ideal, unmoved by the most alluring

[1] Cp. Note on p. 444.

hope or most deterrent fear, is capable of leaping into the jaws of death, and triumphs even in ruin, on the Cross, or in the flames.

The same deep meaning, though in quite a different form, as we shall see, is to be found in the myth of the Fall of Man, and it is highly significant that the two most intellectual nations — those two to whom we, after all, owe the foundation, on the one hand, of scientific and artistic, on the other hand of moral and religious culture, — that these two nations, the Greeks and the Jews, should in their most ancient myths develop one and the same idea, the idea which forms the motive power of every creative action essential for civilisation.

The meaning of these two myths offers a remarkable corroboration of the fundamental idea with which we started out in connection with Goethe's and Schopenhauer's definition of genius, namely, that he alone is capable of proving himself divine and creative, whose attitude is purely objective, who is able to concentrate himself fully on the object before him and, in his deepened interest, in his real love for, and complete devotion to, the matter in hand, allows himself to be turned aside from his goal by no subjective, personal motives, by no alluring or threatening considerations, neither by *hope* nor by *fear*. For this reason Meister Eckehart says: "Sincere and complete *devotion* is a virtue above all virtues. No work of importance can be produced without it ... Devotion in all respects most advantages the matter in hand. Devotion need not worry, no gain escapes it. Where a man out of devotion sacrifices his own, God is bound to intervene for him on the spot."[1] So, too,

[1] *Schriften und Predigten.* Aus dem Mittelhochdeutschen übersetzt von Hermann Büttner, 1903-9, vol. II, p. 1: "Aufrichtige und völlige *Hingabe* ist eine Tugend vor allen Tugenden. Kein Werk von Belang kann ohne sie zustande kommen ... Hingabe tut überall das Beste

in the myths of Pandora and the Fall of Man, the divine in man is shown by his complete devotion, by his ability to free himself inwardly from the conflict between good and evil, and, thereby, from all narrow, personal regard for what might fill him with *hope* or *fear*. So, not led astray by the temptations and terrors of life, he is free to give himself up entirely to the matter he has at heart, and, with "the completest *objectivity*," to exert his powers to the utmost in an artistic, a scientific, or a practical form.

Let us first more closely consider the Pandora myth. Hesiod, who lived 800 years before Christ and is the oldest Greek writer next to Homer, has told us of the birth of the first woman, Pandora. According to this myth, there existed in the Beginning two Titan brothers, sons of Japetus, Prometheus and Epimetheus. *Pro* and *Epi* are antitheses. *Pro* means before, and *Epi* after; *metheus* is derived from the word *emathon* (*μανθάνω* aor. *ἔμαθον*), which means, I have understood, I have comprehended. Accordingly Prometheus denotes the man who has understood or comprehended beforehand, who takes a thing in hand with wise foresight and after sensible deliberation, who knows what is to be done before he sets to work. Epimetheus, on the contrary, denotes the man who has not understood or comprehended the thing until it has happened, who, without proper deliberation and preparation stumbles blindly into things and finds out what he is doing when the mischief is done. Prometheus and Epimetheus thus denote the *wise* man and the *fool*; the *genius* ever looking ahead and around, and the *Philistine* limping long behind. Now, it is characteristic of the Philistine

zur Sache... Hingabe darf sich nicht sorgen, es entgeht ihr kein Gewinn: wo der Mensch aus Hingabe das Seine preisgibt, da auf der Stelle muß notgedrungen Gott für ihn eintreten."

that, devoid of all foresight, he simply waits in anxious suspense for what the uncertain future will bring him, and hence, according as his fate appears to him attractive or threatening, alternates helplessly between hope and fear. Accordingly Goethe writes to Zelter:

"What is a Philistine?
A hollow gut
Filled with hope and fear,
A wretched creature!" [1]

The wise man, on the other hand, knows that too much worry about what may happen in the unknown and incalculable future only cripples him; and he casts off the fear of that which may possibly befall him in carrying out his work, — like Prometheus, who created men and procured fire for them without troubling himself about what Zeus might do to him later on. In his creative work the wise man knows no fear, and he also frees himself from the attractions of hope that, with the flattery and delusion of Utopian dreams, would blind him to grim reality and to the limits of his own abilities, in promising him certain and easy success. Therefore the wise man leaves the future, as far as it is quite uncertain and he cannot yet foresee it, to itself and casts away paralysing care; he is neither in fear of what is to come, nor does he hope for it; but with clear insight and undaunted heart makes use of the present, dealing composedly and sagely with what lies within his horizon and may there-

[1] *Briefwechsel zwischen Goethe und Zelter in den Jahren 1796—1832*, herausgegeben von Riemer. Brief vom 4. September 1831. Cp. *Zahme Xenien.* Goethes Werke (Hempel), Band III, p. 267:

"Was ist ein Philister?
Ein hohler Darm,
Mit Furcht und Hoffnung ausgefüllt,
Dass Gott erbarm!"

fore with more or less certainty be foreseen and predetermined. The fool, in his tense expectation, fear, and hope, snatches at the uncertain and incalculable, whereas just that escapes him, which to one of cooler blood and "tranquil soul," as Goethe calls it, may with more or less probability be foreseen or pre-estimated. Hence truly beneficial, creative action is only possible to the "tranquil soul," free from restless expectation, from paralysing fear, and delusive hope.

Hesiod speaks, therefore, of

> "Prometheus vers'd in arts
> Of various cunning: Epimetheus last,
> Of erring soul, who from the first drew down
> Sore evil on th' inventive race of man;
> For he the first from Jove unwary took
> The clay-form'd maid."[1]

It was the wise, foreseeing, creative Prometheus, who, according to the myth, created human beings, but only men, not women. Women, as wanting in the wise foresight of creative genius, — of course only in the opinion of this ancient myth — could not be the work of Prometheus. Hence there existed as yet no woman to bewilder the senses of man, and according to Hesiod's story, it was reserved for the hatred of the gods to call her into existence. The fact that Prometheus, that is, the wise, foreseeing spirit, created man, signifies that what alone makes man really man is this very spirit of foresight without the tense expectation of what might happen in

[1] *The Remains of Hesiod the Ascræan*, translated from the Greek into English verse by Ch. Abr. Elton, 1809, p. 101.

Cp. *Hesiod. The Poems and Fragments.* Done into English prose by A. W. Mair, 1908, p. 49: "and crafty Prometheus of shifty counsels, and Epimetheus of erring wits, who was the origin of evil for men who live by bread. For he it was who first received from Zeus the woman he had fashioned."

the future, is the very mind free from fear and hope and endowed with the gift of wise deliberation. Without these Promethean powers man would have remained a mere animal, ruled only by the temptations of hope and the harassings of fear, attracted by food and the female of its kind, and driven by hunger and pain.

According to the myth, to Prometheus man also owes the greatest advance in civilisation — the turning of fire to man's use. Only the being who could overcome fear could learn to control fire, the terrible element of which even the wildest and strongest animals are afraid. The gods who, according to the myth, were not very kindly disposed towards Prometheus' creatures, knew only too well that the use of fire would raise men high above a state of animalism, and that by it men would draw nearer to the creative gods themselves. For this reason, Zeus, who wanted to preserve the distance between the gods and the lower beings, witheld fire from the protégés of Prometheus. Nothing, indeed, has raised men so high above animals as the use and mastery of fire. By means of its warmth and light man protects himself against the icy frost of winter and dispels the deep darkness of night, with fire he scares away the most dangerous beasts of prey and destroys the widest and thickest forests in order to obtain arable land, by fire he refines various metals from the hardest ore and, as if they were the softest wax, fashions them into tools, arms and ornaments; with fire he prepares his food and makes the uneatable eatable and the unwholesome wholesome. And the very control men now hold over all the globe by means of their manufactures, machinery and traffic, their giant steamers and express trains, their wonderful tools and dreadful weapons, all these are solely the outcome of the manifold uses to which fire is put.

Therefore, in spite of the resistance of the gods who were jealous of their superiority, Prometheus, the creator-mind, procured fire for men by stealing it from Vulcan's forge and bringing it secretly in a hollow reed from heaven to earth; for which act the gods revenged themselves bitterly enough, indeed, on him and on men. Hesiod tells us, how Prometheus beguiled the wisdom of Jupiter:

> "Then again
> Cloud-gatherer Jove with indignation spake:
> 'Son of Iapetus! o'er all deep vers'd
> In counsels, dost thou then remember yet
> Thy arts delusive?'
> So to wrath incens'd
> Spake he of wisdom incorruptible:
> And still the fraud remembering, from that hour
> The strength of unexhausted fire denied
> To all the dwellers upon earth. But him
> Benevolent Prometheus did beguile:
> The far-seen splendour in a hollow reed
> He stole, of inexhaustible flame. But then
> Resentment stung the Thunderer's immost soul;
> And his heart chaf'd in anger, when he saw
> The fire far-gleaming in the midst of men.
> Straight for the flame bestow'd devis'd he ill
> To man."[1]

The distance between gods and men had to be kept. In spite of the height of civilisation which they had reached

[1] *The Remains of Hesiod*, transl. by Elton, 1809, pp. 104, 105.

Cp. *Hesiod. The Poems and Fragments*, done into English prose by A. W. Mair, 1908, p. 51, 52: "Then heavily moved Zeus the Cloud Gatherer spake unto him: 'Son of Iapetos, who knowest counsels beyond all others, O fond! thou hast not yet forgotten thy crafty guile.' So in anger spake Zeus, who knoweth counsels imperishable. And thenceforward, remembering ever more that guile, he gave not the might of blazing fire

by the use of fire, Prometheus' creatures were to be forced back again to the state of wretched beings exposed to all forms of destruction; and though till then, according to the myth, they had lived in a Paradise without knowledge of any sort of evil,

> "From evil free and labour's galling load;
> Free from diseases that with racking rage
> Precipitate the pale decline of age,"[1]

henceforth they were to taste of every sort of evil in the fullest measure, and so to discover that they were anything but immortal, blessed gods, that, in spite of their sharing with the gods the use of heavenly fire, there was no comparison whatever between themselves and these deities.

The gods took their revenge, moreover, in a spirit of grimmest mockery; for it was in the most attractive, the most seductive form that the fullness of evil approached men, so that they should stretch out their arms towards it, and call themselves blessed, at the very moment when ruin was on the point of overwhelming them. Now, nothing in the world so agitates man, so drives him beside himself, so robs him of his calm reflection and wise, Promethean foresight, so pitifully keeps him tossing to and fro between delight and regret, between desire and suffering, between hope and fear, as woman. It is she who first teaches him what carking, depressing care really

to wretched mortals who dwell upon the earth. But the good son of Iapetos deceived him and stole the far-seen gleam of unwearied fire in a hollow fennel stalk, and stung to the depths the heart of Zeus who thundereth on high, and angered his dear heart when he beheld among men the far-shining gleam of fire. And straightway for fire he devised evil for men."

[1] *The Remains of Hesiod*, transl. by Elton, 1809, p. 145.

Cp. *Hesiod*, transl. by Mair, p. 4: "For of old the tribes of men lived on the earth apart from evil and grievous toil and sore diseases that bring the fates of death to men."

is, she who brings home to him most clearly and conclusively the fact that he is not a god, superior to all. Nothing in the world holds forth such promise of exceeding happiness to man as woman; and nought else in the world can make him so bitterly unhappy that all other evils seem as nothing in comparison with his own misery. Therefore it was the will of Zeus that a woman in an attractive form should bring the fullness of evil to men and bring home to them their ungodlikeness:

> "'O son of Japhet!' with indignant heart
> Spake the cloud-gatherer, 'O unmatch'd in art!
> Exultest thou in this the flame retriev'd,
> And dost thou triumph in the god deceiv'd?
> But thou with the posterity of man
> Shalt rue the fraud whence mightier ills began:
> This fire shall draw perdition on the race,
> And all enamour'd shall their bane embrace.'
> The Sire who rules the earth and sways the pole
> Had said, and laughter fill'd his secret soul."[1]

In order to carry out his evil intention, Zeus commanded the "renowned Hephaistos" or Vulcan to fashion the image of a woman of earth and water, that is, of the solid and fluid elements:

> "He bade the crippled god his hest obey,
> And mould with tempering water plastic clay;
> With human nerve and human voice invest
> The limbs elastic and the breathing breast;

[1] *The Remains of Hesiod.* transl. by Elton, 1809, p. 143.

Cp. *Hesiod*, transl. by Mair, p. 3: "'Son of Iapetos, cunning above men, thou joyest to have dealt deceitfully and stolen fire, great bane as it shall be to thyself and to the men of aftertime. For fire will I give them an evil thing wherein they shall rejoice, embracing their own doom.' So spake the Father of men and gods, and laughed aloud."

Fair as the blooming goddesses above,
A virgin's likeness with the looks of love." [1]

It was Zeus' will that all the gods should endow this virgin, the first woman, with their gifts, and therefore she was called "Pandora," that is, endowed by all:

"The name Pandora to the maid was giv'n;
For all the gods conferr'd a gifted grace
To crown this mischief of the mortal race." [2]

That the newly created woman might commend herself to man by her usefulness, Zeus directed Athene to bestow womanly skill on her:

"He bade Minerva teach the skill that sheds
A thousand colours in the gliding threads." [3]

The goddess of beauty and love was commanded to adorn her with the greatest charms of woman that captivate man's senses and hold him more securely in bondage than does anything else on earth:

"He call'd the magic of love's golden queen
To breathe around a witchery of mien;
And eager passion's never-sated flame,
And cares of dress that prey upon the frame." [4]

[1] *The Remains of Hesiod*, transl. by Elton, 1809, p. 143.
Cp. *Hesiod*, transl. by Mair, p. 3: "And He bade glorious Hephaistos speedily to mingle earth with water, and put therein human speech and strength and make as the deathless goddesses to look upon the fair form of a lovely maiden."

[2] Id. p. 145.
Cp. *Hesiod*, transl. by Mair, pp. 3, 4: "And Hermes named this woman Pandora, for that all the dwellers in Olympos had bestowed on her a gift: to be the bane of men that live by bread."

[3] Id. p. 143.
Cp. *Hesiod*, transl. by Mair, p. 3: "And Athene Zeus bade teach her handiwork, to weave the embroidered web."

[4] Id. p. 144.
Cp. *Hesiod*, transl. by Mair, p. 3: "And He bade golden Aphrodite shed grace about her head and grievous desire and wasting passion."

The outward ornaments and embellishments that help to ensnare man and to bewilder his senses, should also not be forgotten:

"The cestus Pallas clasp'd, the robe array'd:
Ador'd Persuasion and the Graces young
Her taper'd limbs with golden jewels hung:
Round her fair brow the lovely-tressed Hours
A garland twin'd of spring's purpureal flow'rs:
The whole attire Minerva's graceful art
Dispos'd, adjusted, form'd to every part."[1]

But Hermes, the god of traders and swindlers, received instruction from Zeus to instil into Pandora a mean, deceitful disposition in exact contrast with her enchanting exterior:

"Bade Hermes last endue with craft refin'd
Of treacherous manners, and a shameless mind."[2]

And Hermes, who was at the same time the Herald, the Speaker of the gods, was able to make her an adept in the use of her tongue:

"And last the winged herald of the skies,
Slayer of Argus, gave delusive lies;
Insidious manners, honeyed speech instill'd,
As he that rolls the deepening thunder will'd."[3]

[1] *The Remains of Hesiod*, transl. by Elton, 1809, p. 144.
Cp. *Hesiod*, transl. by Mair, p. 3: "And the goddess grey-eyed Athene girdled and arrayed her: the goddess Graces and the Lady Persuasion hung chains of gold about her: the fair-tressed Hours crowned her with flowers of spring. All manner of adornment did Pallas Athene bestow about her body."

[2] Id. p. 144.
Cp. *Hesiod*, transl. by Mair, p. 3: "And Hermes, the Messenger, the Slayer of Argos, He bade give her a shameless mind and a deceitful soul."

[3] Id. p. 144.
Cp. *Hesiod*, transl. by Mair, p. 3: "And in her breast, the Messenger, the Slayer of Argos, put lies and cunning words and a deceitful soul, as Zeus the Thunderer willed. Also the Messenger of the gods gave her speech."

At last Zeus gave her as his dowry a large closed vessel, a sort of cask or jar, *pithos* (πίθος), filled to the brim with all the innumerable evils from which men until then had been exempt and by which they were to be degraded to perishable and ungodlike beings.

Pandora with her fatal vessel was now by Zeus' order escorted to earth by Hermes and there taken to Epimetheus, the unwise brother of Prometheus. From his dwelling, from the house of the fool, of the Philistine, of the mentally blind man, and loosed by the hand of the first woman, all evils were to rush forth into the world. The fool in league with the woman was to cast godlike creative man down from his pinnacle. In vain had the foreseeing Prometheus warned his foolish brother against the gifts of the gods. Prometheus had already procured all that was good for man, above all things, heavenly fire. Whatever was further to be expected from Zeus could only be the dark side of the picture, could only help the gods to their revenge:

> "The Sire commands the winged herald bear
> The finish'd nymph, th' inextricable snare:
> To Epimetheus was the present brought,
> Prometheus' warning vanish'd from his thought —
> That he disclaim each offering from the skies,
> And straight restore, lest ill to man arise.
> But he receiv'd; and conscious knew too late
> Th' insidious gift, and felt the curse of fate." [1]

As soon as Pandora had arrived in Epimetheus' house, she lifted the lid of the vessel, and all the evils that Zeus

[1] *The Remains of Hesiod*, transl. by Elton, 1809, p. 145.

Cp. *Hesiod*, transl. by Mair, p. 4: "Now when He had wrought the sheer delusion unescapable, the Father sent the glorious Slayer of Argos, the gods' swift Messenger, unto Epimetheus with the gift. And Epimetheus took no thought how Prometheus had bidden him never take a gift from Olympian Zeus, but send it back, lest haply it become the bane of men. But he took it, and afterward in sorrow learned its meaning."

had intended for man rushed out with irresistible force and spread themselves over all the earth. Ever since then Prometheus' creatures have been their helpless prey. In thousands and thousands of shapes, they hover around man's head, and when his hour has come, they fall on him like vultures and tear him to pieces; all forms of disease and lingering sickness, all sorts of want and need, misery and care, all kinds of destruction and death:

> "The woman's hands an ample casket bear; —
> She lifts the lid, — she scatters ills in air." [1]

Still, luckily for man, Pandora managed her business rather clumsily and, in feminine haste, banged the heavy lid of the vessel to, before it was quite empty of its fatal contents. So it happened that the worst and most grievous of all evils, which because of its great weight had stuck to the bottom of the cask under all the others and had not reached the brim until all the lighter evils had fluttered out, was held fast and imprisoned in the disastrous vessel just at the last moment by the banging-to of the lid. This worst and most grievous of all evils was the *elpis* (ἐλπίς), the tense *expectation* of what may happen in the future, the restless tossing to and fro between *hope* and *fear:*

"Hope-fear (*elpis*) remain'd within, nor took its flight;
Beneath the casket's verge conceal'd from sight.
Th' unbroken cell with closing lid the maid
Seal'd, [and the cloud-assembler's voice obey'd]." [2]

[1] *The Remains of Hesiod,* transl. by Elton, 1809, p. 145:
Cp. *Hesiod,* transl. by Mair, p. 4: "But the woman took off the great lid of the Jar with her hands and made a scattering thereof and devised baleful sorrows for men."

[2] Id. p. 146 "Hope sole remain'd within, nor took her flight," &c.
Cp. *Hesiod,* transl. by Mair, p. 4: "Only Hope abode within in her unbreakable chamber under the lips of the Jar and flew not forth. For

But she did not fully carry out Zeus' directions, for in consequence of her hastiness the worst of the evils remained shut up in the vessel. Thus this worst evil — an evil more fearful than sickness, want, or death, because of its power to lower man again to the animal state — this instability and oscillation of the soul between the contrary emotions of hope and fear, was robbed of its full force. Hence it is that man retains the power of defending himself against *elpis* and of going his own way uninfluenced by hope and fear, by good and evil, with a tranquil and serene soul. On the other hand, man remains the prey of all the evils that had escaped from the vessel. Sooner or later, they fall upon him and destroy him:

"Issued the rest in quick dispersion hurl'd,
And woes innumerous roam'd the breathing world:
With ills the land is rife, with ills the sea;
Diseases haunt our frail humanity:
Self-wandering through the noon, the night they glide,
Voiceless — a voice the power all-wise denied.
Know then this awful truth; It is not given
T'elude the wisdom of omniscient Heaven." [1]

ere she could, the woman put on the lid of the Jar, [as Zeus the Lord of the Aegis, the Gatherer of the Clouds, devised.]"

The words enclosed in brackets are interpolated. Cp. *Hesiodi Carmina*, instr. Thomas Gaisford, 1823, p. 84:

"μούνη δ' αὐτόθι Ἐλπὶς ἐν ἀῤῥήκτοισι δόμοισι
ἔνδον ἔμιμνε πίθου ὑπὸ χείλεσιν, οὐδὲ θύραζε
ἐξέπτη· πρόσθεν γὰρ ἐπέμβαλε πῶμα πίθοιο,
*[*αἰγιόχου βουλῇσι Διὸς νεφεληγερέταο.]*

*"Hunc versum Aristarchi jussu et Plutarchi auctoritate, qui solum hunc praetermittit *De Consol.* p. 105. inducendum putavit Heinsius, probante Graevio."

[1] Id. p. 146.

Cp. *Hesiod*, transl. by Mair, p. 4: "But ten thousand other evils wander among men. For the earth is full of evil and the sea is full. By night and by day come diseases of their own motion, bringing evil unto mortal men, silently, since Zeus the Counsellor hath taken away their voice. So surely may none escape the will of Zeus."

The sense of this myth is evidently as follows: Though man has attained to such a height of civilisation by means of his control of the element of fire, he has, as a consequence of Zeus' revenge, fallen back into the condition of a weak creature, that is anything but divine; man is in unconditional subjection to external fate; the thousands and thousands of evils that escaped from Pandora's vessel, govern him entirely, and every moment threaten him with destruction. So far as this goes Zeus successfully carried out his purpose, and the distance between gods and men was maintained. But inwardly, in his soul, man has still retained a spark of divinity. Where a creative idea guides him, he rises above his fate, and where his work demands, he looks destruction fearlessly in the face; likewise he does not allow himself to be turned from the way that he has once recognized as the right one even by the most radiant promises and fascinating pictures that hope can conjure up before him. The evils that escaped from the vessel cannot be recaptured, they retain their absolute dominion over man; but the *elpis*, the tempting, delusive hope and paralysing fear, the everlasting waiting for the uncertain things of the future, the mean dependency upon personal advantage and disadvantage, the breathless chase after what seems to be good and the cowardly flight before what seems to be evil; this remained locked up in Pandora's vessel. That means, the worst of all evils, the *elpis*, holds not an absolute dominion over man as do all the other evils, but its power can be broken, and man can be freed from its dominion. Whenever the man of genius in entire self-surrender devotes himself to a task with "completest *objectivity*," with the purest "love of truth," and whenever he is guided by a creative idea, he is free from the *elpis* and its tempting or paralysing power. The man most inspired by genius,

most godlike, as well as the narrow-minded man, is subject to external evils such as loss, want, sickness, old age and death; yet inwardly, in so far as man is inspired by genius, and his feelings, thoughts and actions are godlike, he is superior to his fate. So through the fact that the *elpis* has been kept shut up in the vessel it comes about that the distance between gods and men has been only outwardly preserved; inwardly man through his genius, that is, the creative nature within him, attains to godlike heights. So Zeus' vengeance was only in part accomplished and his evil intention in the main point frustrated.[1]

The same deep meaning is contained in the Jewish Myth of the Fall of Man. It was probably fixed in writing in the eighth century B. C. In place of the *elpis*, that is, the tossing to and fro between hope and fear, by the Jewish Myth the mean dependence on earthly good and evil, on *tob wara* (טוֹב וָרָע), on what awakens *hope* and *fear*, is represented as ungodlike, as combined with the loss of man's nearness to God and with his banishment from the divine bliss of Paradise. In the Jewish myth, however, there is no question of the envy of the gods, but of the reverse. Jehovah wishes to keep men in Paradise near Him. He speaks to them and holds intercourse with them as with His equals, He wishes them to remain a god-

[1] From antiquity to the most recent times the meaning of the fact that the *elpis* remains shut up in Pandora's vessel whilst all the other evils are allowed to flutter forth has not been understood. Compare *Ausführliches Lexikon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie*, herausgegeben von W. H. Roscher, 46. Lieferung, 1902, p. 1522: "Strange to say amongst the contents of the vessel which were apparently made up of all the human ills, hope appears and is left shut up in it alone, because the woman quickly closed the lid again... However hope is not exactly an evil, for even false hopes may comfort man."

Here as well as in many other commentaries the fact has been overlooked that *elpis* has various meanings. Literally, as every Greek dictionary shows, *elpis* means "expectation" — the state of being in suspense about what the future may bring. If it is the tense expectation of something good, *elpis* means "hope;" if of something evil, it means "fear."

like race, and for this reason forbids them to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

The Hebrew words *tob* (טוֹב) and *ra* (רַע) sometimes mean good and evil in a moral sense; but mostly they correspond to the Latin *bonum* and *malum* and mean what is useful and harmful to man in quite a general sense, and so whatever is to him, subjectively and selfishly regarded, a good to be desired or an evil to be feared, personal advantage or disadvantage.

As long as man has not tasted of the fatal fruit of the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that is, as long as he is above what is, in an egotistical sense, good and evil to him, as long as he does not lose himself in the ignoble pursuit of earthly good or the cowardly flight from earthly evil, his soul is capable of being moved by ever higher goods, until his soul is perfectly filled with the highest good, the *summum bonum*, and he is able to lead a productive and divine life. Such a man does not know death, for he vanquishes it with ease in the service of his idea or vocation; much in the spirit of the Spartans, who, when they went out to meet death for the sake of the fatherland, annointed and adorned themselves as if they were going to a feast. In this way also, when the kingdom of God is alive in us, the highest good raises us above want and failure, above all misery and distress. On the other hand, the man devoid of every higher idea, buoyed up by vain hopes, clings greedily to the good things of this life and trembles in servile fear before the evil of destruction. He it is who truly tastes death and really knows what evil is. This is what we must under-

stand when the Lord God says to man, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

A contradiction has been found in the fact that God threatened man with death, but that man nevertheless remained alive after he had eaten of the forbidden fruit; the contradiction, however, explains itself here if, in accordance with the real and deep meaning of the whole myth, the inward, spiritual death is meant. The man who is pitifully tossed about between hope and fear, between good and evil, has already tasted of death in life. In the same sense, Goethe, at the end of the second part of "Faust," makes Care—that combination of hope and fear which is to express man's dependence upon good and evil—say of those whom she rules and robs of true life, that they are

"Though not choked, in Life not sharing." [1]

To the same degree as man falls away from the divine existence, filled as it is with the Spirit from on high and guided by reasonable ideas, he sinks to the level of the beast—the creature almost exclusively attracted by the meanest good and repulsed by the meanest evil. This is why the myth makes an animal, an animal that creeps in the dust and thus might serve to symbolise the meanest type of mind, namely, the serpent, give man the advice to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of what for him, in a limited, egotistic sense, means good and evil.

In the wonderful symbolism of this profound Myth, the eternal God, and the serpent crawling in the dust, are presented as extreme contrasts. Between the two, however, stands man, in whose soul the god and the beast are at variance with one another. Nothing is so despicable to the Oriental as dust. All that has value and importance

[1] *Faust.* Translated by Bayard Taylor, 1911, p. 493.

has stature and form: what, on the other hand, is perfectly formless, ground to powder, to dust, is, in his opinion, really destroyed and worthless. When the Oriental feels himself deeply humilated and crushed by adversity or his own fault, he throws himself into the dust and puts ashes on his head. Therefore the myth chooses the serpent, the creature that crawls in the dust, to be the symbol of a mean, frivolous, low mind.

In contrast to the higher intelligence of the godly man, governed by creative ideas, is placed the base cunning of a creature that takes into account nothing but its own advantage and is guided only by self-seeking motives, by the meanest good and evil; a creature that sees everything only in so far as it relates to its own vain, perishable existence, and, regardless of all else, seeks to make itself the centre of its surroundings. Therefore the serpent, as the symbol of the bestial, self-seeking side of man's nature, is called, "more subtil than any beast of the field." Subtle, too, is the sophistry by which it sought to make clear to the woman the advantages of the knowledge of what, to a self-seeking person, seems to be good and evil. The serpent gave God the lie in the words: "Ye shall not surely die;" for the inner death, the death in life, when the higher spiritual life is wanting, is not acknowledged by the self-seeking creature of low intelligence. It is concerned solely with avoiding bodily death, enjoying in bestial ease what it calls life. The serpent continues: "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

The self-seeking creature (compare the corresponding arguments of Stirner and Nietzsche) argues as follows: "God is looked upon as the centre of all existence, and as such everything else is referred to Him. Then make yourselves, too, the centre of all the world, not acknowl-

edging anything higher than yourselves; make everything depend upon your own selves, and regard things only in so far as, in quite an egoistical sense, they import good or evil to you. In this central position you will be like unto God — then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods. God is Himself an Egoist, because He wills that everything shall exist solely in relation to Himself. He wills, for instance, that you shall live only for Him and walk only in His ways. Do as He does; be egoists too; acknowledge as good or evil only what serves or harms your own persons; tear yourselves away from God and live your own lives, dismissing every phantom ideal and caring only for your very substantial selves."

The self-seeker is blind to the significance of the higher good or the ideal by which the better man is influenced, and thinks the latter blind, because, under certain circumstances, he sacrifices everything for what to the selfish man seems unreal and empty, such as patriotism, humanity, or the kingdom of God. The egoist sees, for instance, how others, in patriotic enthusiasm, are ready to hazard the most valuable possessions of life and expose themselves to every possible evil, how they part with their nearest and dearest, neglect their profession, suffer loss, renounce comfort and safety, and submit instead to the greatest hardships, running the risk of being wounded or killed. The man of low intelligence, for whom the idea of his country has no value and no significance, believes that the man who offers his life for such a phantom as patriotism, has been struck blind, so that he cannot see what is really good and evil for him, but like a madman forsakes the most precious things of the world to risk death for the sake of a mere shadow. The egoist therefore thinks he must open the eyes of the other who cannot yet recognise what is actually good and evil.

Could the egoist who makes himself the centre of the universe live for ever and were he not subject to the transitoriness of earthly existence, he would never discover his error and would go on, in this sophistical fashion, always seeing God in himself and calling only that good which ministers to his personal advantage and that evil which encroaches upon his fancied divinity. The nothingness and decay of his petty self, however, reduce his imaginary divinity *ad absurdum*, and hence the myth tells how the Lord God said, with an ironical hint at the so called godliness of the egoist: "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken."

Thus man who had sunk from his ideal height to the state of the animal and, like the animal, had succumbed to the attraction and repulsion of what seems to the egotist to be good and evil, was driven from the presence of God and lost his true life; and God "placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

Here, too, as in the Pandora myth, it is woman who brings destruction on humanity. It is she to whom the serpent first comes. This signifies that woman is more susceptible to hope and fear and more dependent upon the difference between good and evil than man, who is guided and influenced rather by productive ideas. A beautiful feature of the myth lies in the description of how shame arose simultaneously with the fall of man: "she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons."

Of all earthly good and evil, nothing so much affects man, nothing stirs him so deeply, and by nothing is he so violently and passionately tossed about between hope and fear, as by good and evil in relation to the other sex.

Another beautiful feature of the myth is that not until man was driven out of Paradise did he learn what the stern drudgery of work meant. The godlike man, full of productive thoughts, knows nothing of the hard compulsion to work; for what he does, he does with a happy heart, in the service of an idea, in full devotion to the object before him. Therefore work to him is enjoyment even when it gives him much trouble and he has to take the greatest pains with it. He is in a state of paradise, beyond what seems to the egoist good and evil, and knows only the happiness of hastening forward towards his goal. The man, on the contrary, who is driven out of paradise, far from the divine Presence, guided in his actions by no creative idea and knowing nothing of true devotion, this man learns what the drudgery of work is, since his heart is not in it and he works under compulsion. It is to him therefore, to the man who has sunk nearer to the beasts of the fields and is now only a breathing piece of clay influenced by petty, earthly ways of thought, to him who after a life passed in the dust, shall return again to the dust from which he came, that the Lord God in the myth says: "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Whoever, on the other hand, sensates, thinks and acts in the creative spirit of the genius and with the genius' love and complete devotion to the matter in hand, works himself out of the animal state; he has put himself beyond the egotistical view of good and evil, beyond the influence of hope and fear, and has, therefore, risen again to the Presence of God, to the state of paradise where man is no longer a miserable earthworm crawling in the dust, but, as a man of genius, enjoys the fellowship and friendship of God the Creator.

The child, too, whose nature is so nearly related to that of the man of genius, is in a state of paradise. Of children Christ said to His disciples: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven;" and Heraclitus compared creative Omnipotence to a child at play. In the Fall of Man, that is, by the loss of God's presence, is symbolised also the change which takes place in a man's nature when he ceases to be a child at play and begins to lose himself in the world with its self-seeking knowledge of good and evil.[1]

Spinoza states: "If men were born free, they would form no conception of good and evil so long as they were free... This (together with the other things we have before demonstrated) appears to have been what was meant by Moses in that history of the first man... we are told that God forbade free man to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and warned him that as soon as he ate of it he would immediately dread death rather than desire to live. Afterwards we are told that when man found a wife who agreed entirely with his nature, he saw that there could be nothing in nature which could be more profitable to him than his wife. But when he came to

[1] Cp. pp. 56—61.

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[1] Cp. pp. 56—61.

believe that the brutes were like himself, he immediately began to imitate their affects, and to lose his liberty, which the Patriarchs afterwards recovered, being led by the spirit of Christ, that is to say, by the idea of God, which alone can make a man free, and cause him to desire for other men the good he desires for himself." [1]

All productivity, which is of a sound creative nature, is intimately connected with true freedom, that is, with freedom from the irresistible attraction and repulsion of earthly good and evil, and from tempting hope and paralysing fear connected with them. Let us conclude with the words of Meister Eckehart: "Whoever attaches himself to God, to him will God attach Himself and all that is excellent... The more thou keepest thyself *free*, the more enlightenment, truth and wisdom will fall to thy share... For as soon as God has touched the *depths* of thy soul with his truth, the light is thrown into thy *powers* too, and then a man can do more in one moment than anyone could teach him." [2]

[1] *Ethic.* Translated by W. H. White; translation revised by A. H. Stirling 4th ed., 1910, pp. 235, 236. — "Si homines liberi nascerentur, nullum boni et mali formarent conceptum, quamdiu liberi essent... Atque hoc et alia, quae jam demonstravimus, videntur a Mose significari in illa primi hominis historia... atque eatenus narratur, quod Deus homini libero prohibuerit, ne de arbore cognitionis boni et mali comederet et quod, simulac de ea comederet, statim mortem metueret potius, quam vivere cuperet. Deinde, quod inventa ab homine uxore, quae cum sua natura prorsus conveniebat, cognovit nihil posse in natura dari, quod ipsi posset illa esse utilius; sed quod, postquam bruta sibi similia esse credidit, statim eorum affectus imitari inceperit, et libertatem suam amittere, quam Patriarchae postea recuperaverunt, ducti Spiritu Christi, hoc est, Dei idea, a qua sola pendet, ut homo liber sit et ut bonum, quod sibi cupit, reliquis hominibus cupiat."

[2] *Meister Eckeharts Schriften und Predigten.* Aus dem Mittelhochdeutschen übersetzt und herausgegeben von Hermann Büttner, 1903-09, vol. II, p. 6; vol. I, pp. 47, 48: "Wer sich an Gott hängt, dem hängt Gott sich an und alles Tüchtige... Denn sobald Gott den *Grund* mit seiner Wahrheit innerlich berührt, so wirft sich das Licht auch in die *Kräfte*, und der Mensch kann im Augenblicke mehr, als ihn irgend jemand zu lehren vermöchte."

XIII.

CONCLUSION

GENIUS has been defined in the most various ways. These definitions are usually based on a correct idea which it is not difficult to bring into harmony with our description of genius. For instance, when genius is characterised as diligence or as patience. In general, diligence is the distinguishing mark of less gifted natures. We have only to think of the diligence and the inexhaustible patience of the Chinaman as compared with the repugnance with which, generally speaking, an Englishman gives himself to any monotonous and laborious occupation. The truth is that man at the lower stage of mental development shows an instinctive, animal, uniform industry, whereas the man of genius displays energetic and restless activity only when stirred by a creative idea, an activity which at times may be interrupted by an extreme devotion to the pleasures of life, or by periods of complete inactivity. When the carrying out of an idea, the offspring of his own mind, is involved, the man of genius is, indeed, capable of displaying the most untiring diligence, but in the service of others, he often appears lamed and deprived of will and energy. When the spirit moves him, and his love for the object before him, his deepened interest are awakened, his diligence even surpasses that of the most industrious coolie. When this deepened, ideal interest is

absent, his attitude can be one of blunt aloofness. Hence diligence is in the man of genius only an accessory, not an essential characteristic such as would make us picture him as being constantly and busily at work. Certainly no busier, more patient man, or one who treats the matter in hand with greater love can be imagined than a genius striving for the realisation of his ideas. But there is also no man more impatient, none who more violently breaks all fetters, or, under certain circumstances, offers greater resistance and displays stronger repugnance to every form of occupation, than a genius who has to bend under the yoke imposed on him by another, or who, when he is exhausted, finds himself forsaken by his ideas.

It has also been said that genius consists in the capability of grasping what is essential in all things. This also is correct. But again, that which enables genius to do so is the deepened interest, the love of the object, of the thing itself, the objective, disinterested spirit. For to none other than a genius do the essential qualities, the peculiar nature of the object, the true character and properties of things show themselves. He whose only desire is to be the main point himself and who only looks subjectively and selfishly at everything, will have no respect for the object and its essential character, for "the actual," the "*factum brutum*," and will rather shut his eyes and deceive himself should the "rude fact" wound his selfish feelings. He is blind with seeing eyes. There is no sharper contrast than that between Nietzsche's statement that the actual, the "*factum brutum*" is to be "interpreted, forced, suppressed, and falsified," and the plain and simple recognition of "the actual" on the part of Napoleon and other men of true genius.

Nietzsche significantly calls the distinguishing property of genius, namely, the grasping of the essential, the

actual, the objective data, a "stoicism of the intellect," an "asceticism" of the mind, an "ascetic ideal." Nietzsche explains: "that stoicism of the intellect which eventually vetoes negation as rigidly as it does affirmation, that *wish* for standing still in front of the actual, the *factum brutum*, . . . this renunciation of interpretation generally, that is, of forcing, doctoring, abridging, omitting, suppressing, inventing, falsifying, and all the other *essential* attributes of interpretation — all this, considered broadly, expresses the asceticism of virtue, quite as efficiently as does any repudiation of the senses, it is at bottom only a *modus* of that repudiation." [1]

This declaration of the modern antisopher is the best proof of the fact that selfishness, falsehood, and narrow-mindedness are related just as closely as disinterestedness, truth, and genius. In the fable the ostrich thrusts its head into the sand, thinking its enemies do not see it, if it does not see them. To speak in Nietzsche's sense, the ostrich of the fable does not display the "stoicism of the intellect," and follows no "ascetic ideal," but rather, as a "super"-ostrich, closes its eyes to the "actual," and prefers to "interpret the rude fact" more in accordance with its "divine," "creative" feeling. In its "instinct of freedom" or its "will to power" the "super"-ostrich practices a "forcing, doctoring, abridging, omitting, suppressing, inventing, falsifying" of the "actual" or the "rude fact," that its pursuers are behind it and are drawing nearer and nearer. It believes that as long as it does not see them, they are not there. So, to be sure, a weak-minded person may think, but not a genius, like Napoleon, who constantly summoned the mightiest powers into the field against himself and, if he would not perish a thousand times, had ever to keep the keenest possible eye on what

[1] *The Complete Works*, ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 196.

was essential and actual in all things. He could not and dared not pursue an ostrich-policy, he could not and dared not delude himself, he was obliged to use the "stoicism of the intellect," to aspire after the "ascetic ideal" and to see things as they really were, to grasp what was essential in them and to bow to facts: "*J'ai un maître qui n'a pas d'entrailles, c'est la nature des choses,*" writes Napoleon.

Hence it is so ridiculous when Lombroso, as a proof of his theory of the inner connection between genius and insanity, describes at full length the conduct of an imbecile drunkard, David Lazzaretti of Arcidosso. For from this account of Lombroso's it appears that the lunatic Lazzaretti lived altogether in a world of fancies and imaginations, and splendidly realised the demand of the antisopher Nietzsche to practice no "stoicism of the intellect," but to "interpret" facts, to explain them according to one's own "creative" caprice, to "force, doctor, abridge, omit, suppress, invent, and falsify" them.

From Lombroso's long-winded account we here quote the following passage which speaks for itself and indicates clearly enough the fool entirely governed by vague fancies, in diametrical contrast to the man of genius who is actuated by the keenest sense for reality, that is, by the healthiest realism: "After announcing a great miracle, he caused to be prepared, with a part of the money collected, banners and garments for the members, embroidered with the animals which had appeared to him in his hallucinations—all of strange and grotesque shapes. He had a richer one made for himself, and, for the rank and file, a square piece of stuff to wear on the breast, which showed a cross, with two C's reversed, ↀ † C, the usual emblem of the association.

"In August, 1878, he assembled a larger number than ever, and, having prescribed prayers and fasts for three

days and three nights, delivered addresses, some of which were public, others private and reserved for believers (who were divided into the various classes of Priest-Hermits, Penitentiary Hermits, Penitent Hermits, and simple associations of the Holy League and Christian Brotherhood) and caused the so-called Confession of Amendment to be made on the 14th, 15th, and 16th August. On the 17th, the great banner with the inscription, 'The Republic is the Kingdom of God,' was raised on the tower. Then, having assembled all the members at the foot of a cross, erected for the purpose, the Prophet administered the solemn oath of fidelity and obedience. At this point, one of David's brothers tried to persuade him to renounce his perilous enterprise, but in vain; for, on the contrary, he replied to those who pointed out the possibility of a conflict, 'He would, on the following day, show them a miracle to prove that he was sent from God in the form of Christ, a judge and leader, and therefore invulnerable, and that every power on earth must yield to his will; a sign from his rod of command was enough to annihilate all the forces of those who dared oppose him.' A member having remarked on the opposition of the government, he added that 'he would ward off the balls with his hands, and render harmless the weapons directed against himself and his faithful followers; and the Government Carbineers themselves would act as a guard of honour to them.' More and more intoxicated with his delirium, he wrote in all seriousness to the Delegate of Public Safety—to whom he had already shown the preparations, and, later on given a half-promise to countermand the procession—'That he was no longer able to do so, having received superior orders to the contrary from God Himself.' He threatened unbelievers with the Divine wrath, if, through want of faith, they rebelled against his will.

"With such intentions, on the morning of August 18th, he set out from Montelabro at the head of an immense crowd, going down towards Arcidosso. He was dressed in a royal cloak of purple embroidered with gold ornaments, and crowned with a kind of tiara surmounted by a crest adorned with plumes; and he held in his hand the staff which he called his rod of command. His principal associates were dressed, less richly than himself, in strangely-fashioned robes of various colours, according to their position in the hierarchy of the Holy League. The ordinary members were dressed in their every-day clothes, without other mark of distinction than the emblematic breastplate previously described. Seven of the graduates of the Brotherhood carried as many banners with the motto, 'The Republic is the Kingdom of God.' They sang the Davidian hymn, each stanza of which ended with the refrain, 'Eternal is the Republic," &c. It is needless to relate what took place in those last hours. The man who had shortly before called himself the King of kings, and believed himself invulnerable, fell, struck by a shot fired by the orders, perhaps by the hand, of a delegate who had many a time been his guest. It appears that he exclaimed as he fell, under the influence of a last delusion, 'The victory is ours!'

"It is certain that the procession he had arranged was not only unarmed, but appeared to be in every way calculated to turn out perfectly harmless. Nocito has well remarked that an examination of the strange emblematic properties of the League proved beyond all doubt that the Government had mistaken a monomaniac for a rebel." [1]

This was a man who did not bow to "the actual," to the "*factum brutum*," who rather, in his "will to power," his "instinct of freedom," knew how to "interpret" facts in his

[1] Lombroso, *The Man of Genius*. 2nd ed., 1905, pp. 303-05.

own way. But a man of genius does not "interpret," but uses his eyes to see and his ears to hear, and recognises the power of the actual. Bismarck says, "We cannot make history, we can only wait for it to come to pass . . . We cannot accelerate the ripening of fruit by holding a lamp under it, and if we strike at unripe fruit, we only hinder its growth and destroy it . . . We cannot accelerate the course of time by setting our watches forward."

The man of genius has further been described as one who is creatively active, who produces something new, original, characteristic. This again is correct, but it deals rather with the external side of genius; for, by unfavourable circumstances, a man of genius may be entirely prevented, either for a time or for ever, from every outward employment of his powers, and yet remain a man of genius. Production is the outward realisation of what is born in one's own mind. But the genius of a man shows itself in the very manner in which he receives the impressions of the outer world, works them up into ideas, and forges them into great projects in order to react upon the world. The creative work of the artist, the philosopher, the statesman, or the founder or reformer of a religion, is therefore primarily dependent on his disinterested absorption in the nature, the essential, true properties of things. Without deepened interest for the object itself, without completest objectivity, without love of truth, there can be no genius and no capacity to snatch from Nature her secrets to produce any work of power, permanency, and originality.

An essay dating from the time of Goethe's Spinoza studies begins with the words, "The ideas of reality or existence and of perfection are one and the same."[1] We have met with this proposition of Spinoza's before, and

[1] *Goethe-Jahrbuch* for 1891, p. 3.

here repeat that when genius aspires at producing something approximately perfect, it must keep the keenest eye on the laws of reality, the laws which govern things as they truly exist, and not indulge in empty, capricious, fantastic notions. Healthy realism, a disinterested perception penetrating to the very depths, into the essential nature of things, leads to true idealism, to an understanding of the great ideas which rule all that exists and which all culminate in the one idea of the highest, most perfect, eternal state of being. This is clearly stated by Goethe when he says, "The idea is one and eternal; nor is it proper that we should use the word in the plural. All the things of which we become cognisant and are able to speak, are but manifestations of the Idea."[1] Hence nothing is further removed from genius than a conscious and intentional opposition to truth and reality, than an indulging in fancies wholly detached from all the laws of actuality, than a self-mirroring which deals purely in the most ridiculous illusions. As all *existence* is based on laws, so also there is no man in whom production is more the expression of laws, and less of mere caprice than in a man of genius who represents the fullest *existence*, the most perfect development of human nature at least from one side, whether it be the artistic, philosophic, practical, or religious side. The following passage gives us a clear idea of how in a man of genius, like Goethe, so marvellously developed in various directions and showing a very high degree of *existence* or perfection of human nature, the sense of the real, a deepened interest, love of the object before him, that is, objectivity, prevailed and enabled him to recognise the eternal idea in each single phenomenon, however insignificant: "I now

[1] *Criticisms, Reflections, and Maxims by Goethe.* Translated by W. B. Rönnfeldt, pp. 187, 188.

turn with my narrative once more to the sea. — I there saw yesterday the haunts of the sea-snails, the limpets, and the crabs, and was highly delighted with the sight. What a precious, glorious object is a living thing! — how wonderfully adapted to its state of existence, how true, how *real (seyend)*. What great advantages do I not derive now from my former studies of nature, and how delighted am I with the opportunity of continuing them."[1]

Whoever is a stranger to this disinterested absorption in the nature of things and only delights in egotistical self-delusion, is incapable of creative work, because he does not know how to seize true hold of things. How can a blind man from within himself find the right way that is to lead him to his goal? He can only wander at random, for there are always innumerable wrong ways, but only one right one. A selfish man is at the same time a stupid man incapable of creating anything; he can only destroy. That is why Stirner says, "We egoists only feel at ease when we destroy;"[2] and in quite the same spirit Nietzsche praises "the awful joy and intense delight in all destruction, in all the ecstasies of victory and cruelty."[3] Woe to him who follows these modern anti-sophers, the deliberate antagonists of all truth. He will not produce or build up, but ruin himself and others, whereas the creative genius points out to humanity the way to an everlasting goal.

[1] *Goethe's Travels in Italy.* Translated by A. J. W. Morrison & Ch. Nisbet, 1911, p. 81.

[2] *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum.* 2. Auflage, 1882, p. 147.

[3] *The Complete Works,* ed. Levy, vol. XIII, p. 41.

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